

Less damage with dormant pruning

Proper tree and shrub pruning removes the dead, weakened, diseased or insect-infested branches. It prolongs plant life and improves plant health and appearance.

Pruning is important for landscape plants, which are often subject to stressful growing conditions.

Although maintenance pruning of most shade trees can be done year-round, intensive pruning should be done in the dormant season.

Late winter to early spring, just prior to the start of new growth, is a good time for pruning trees.

Pruning cuts made in the dormant season close rapidly during the flush of growth in the spring.

In trees that lose their leaves, it is easier to spot problem areas during the dormant season. Also, new leaves that emerge the following spring mask cuts made in winter. Pruning in late fall and

To prevent stripping bark, prune large limbs in three cuts. Make the first cut under the limb, the second on top to remove the majority of the limb, then the third to remove the stub.

early winter reduces sap flow from pruning cuts on trees such as conifers, maple, birch and walnut. Winter pruning minimizes damage to some tree species. The bark of some trees, such as maple and ash, can eas-

Cutting tips

✂ Proper cuts in late winter compartmentalize more rapidly with faster woundwood response. Good winter pruning cuts produce circular "doughnut" callus response in late spring on a relatively healthy tree. The callus develops over the pruning wound margin and differentiates into true wood (woundwood) as the growing season progresses.

✂ When hand pruning, cuts on smaller branches and twigs in the dormant season should be slightly higher at nodes (bud/branch junctions) than cuts at nodes in the growing season.

✂ Winter cuts should start about $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch above the bud and slant away at a 45 degree angle to avoid low temperature injury to bud tissues.

ily tear loose during climbing and pruning during the spring flush of growth.

Don't confuse proper tree pruning with topping. Topping is the indiscriminate removal of a tree's main leader and branches, resulting in stubs. Topping severely disfigures trees and results in "watersprouts" which are weak limbs susceptible to damage from high winds or other adverse weather. Thinning is the correct method of branch removal. Branches are removed from their point of attachment to the trunk or another branch. This method eliminates unhealthy and unsightly stubs. Thinning the canopy reduces the amount of high wind damage.

Professional arborists also consider the tree's branch structure, growth structure and growth habits to produce the strongest, most attractive plant.

When shrubs flower a key

The best time to prune shrubs depends on the plant's flowering habit. Spring flow-

Fast growers

Some trees need very little pruning. Their natural habit is symmetrical and balanced; and they have little tendency to sprout unwanted shoots along their branches. These trees only need attention when they develop diseased or damaged limbs which need to be removed. Trees that need more attention are the fast growers; those that may be only marginally cold hardy in your area; and those that have weak wood or produce narrow crotches where the branches grow from the trunk. Trees planted in the wrong spot under utility lines, crowding walls and hanging over roofs and gutters need frequent pruning. If a tree is too large for its location, judicious pruning can reduce the size of the tree without destroying its attractive, natural shape.

*Courtesy Technic Tool Corporation,
Lewiston, Id.*

ering shrubs should not be pruned heavily in the winter. Although winter pruning does not damage the plant, it can remove flower buds produced during the previous growing season, resulting in fewer blossoms next spring. The best time to prune these is immediately after late spring petal fall.

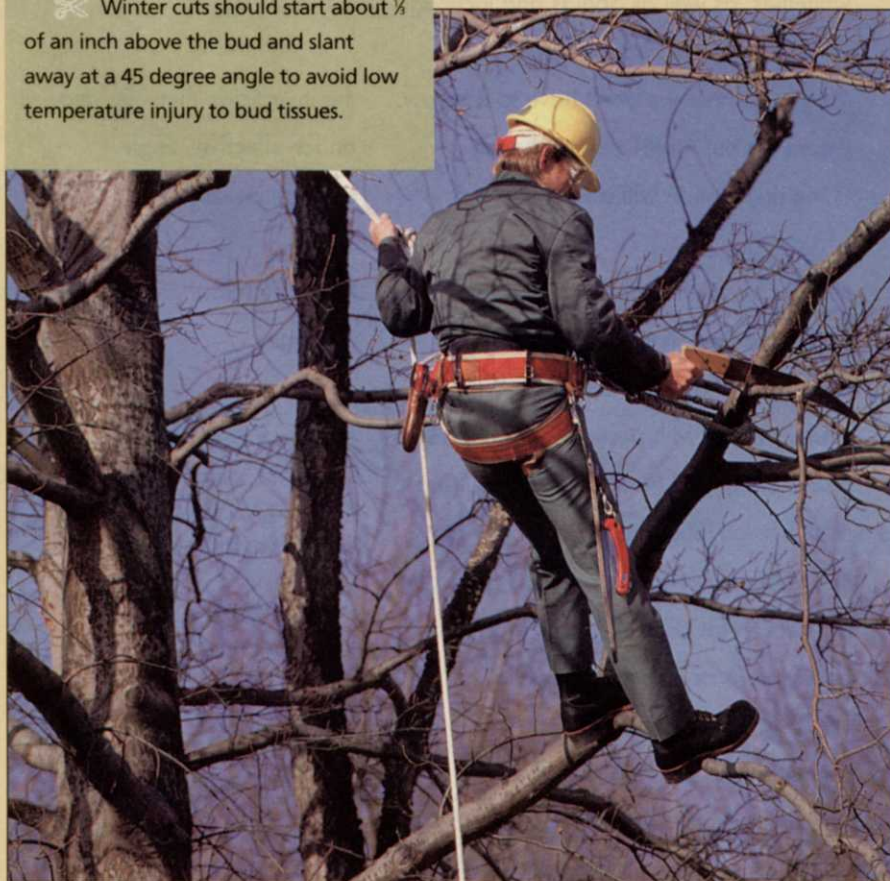
Though summer flowering shrubs can be pruned at any time of the year until close to the time of bloom, late in the dormant season is the best time.

Improper pruning practices can harm trees and shrubs. Pruning cuts that violate branch and trunk collars—natural barriers to disease-causing organisms—can leave trees and shrubs vulnerable to disease.

To ensure tree and shrub health, professional arboricultural standards should be followed when pruning.

Correct pruning produces healthier, stronger trees that live longer.

—*This information Courtesy the Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio.*



Proper pruning improves the health and appearance of trees. Winter is an excellent time for most pruning.