

Pruning Trees Shrubs and Vines



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Trees Get Larger!



Why Prune?

- ⌘ Train or shape
- ⌘ Remove damaged branches
- ⌘ Thin canopy
- ⌘ Renovate
- ⌘ Reinvigorate
- ⌘ Create artistic forms
- ⌘ Control size?

How to Prune Shrubs

- ⌘ Thinning
- ⌘ Heading
- ⌘ Shearing, tipping
- ⌘ Renovating
- ⌘ Pinching

Thinning

- ✓ removal of entire cane or section of cane
- ✓ opens up the shrub to admit light
- ✓ reduces overall height and promotes regrowth



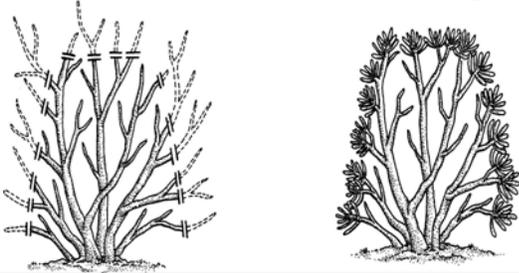
Heading (selective)

- ✓ Cutting back to a bud or shoot
- ✓ Promotes branching, will "fill in" the shrub



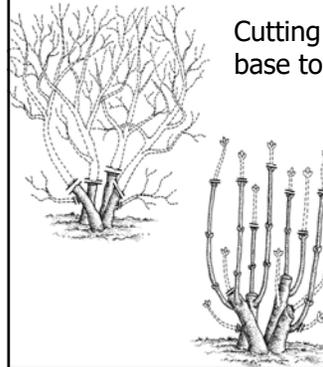
Shearing

- ✓ Non-selective heading: dense growth at branch tips
- ✓ Unnatural form, appropriate for formal hedges



Renovation

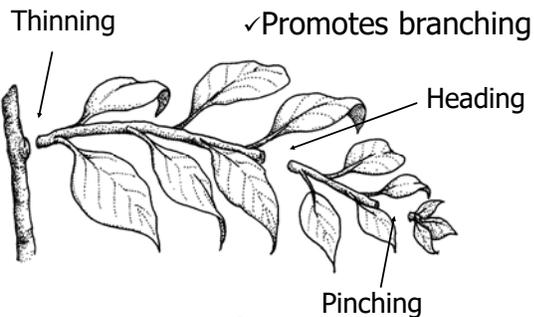
Cutting all canes back to near base to renew all growth



Very harsh technique:
not appropriate for
all shrubs!

Pinching

- ✓ Specialized technique for succulent tissues



Natural Look Pruning for Small Trees and Shrubs

- ⌘ Define your objectives
- ⌘ Know your plants natural habit, c-m-u
- ⌘ Know how your plant will react to pruning
- ⌘ Identify the flowering period
- ⌘ Old wood versus new wood
- ⌘ Mostly thinning cuts
- ⌘ Start early with proper training

Natural Pruning



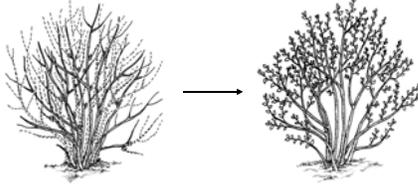
Natural Pruning

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| ⌘ DO | ⌘ DON'T |
| ⌘ Selective pruning | ⌘ Top |
| ⌘ Thinning cuts | ⌘ Shear |
| ⌘ Open plant | ⌘ Heavy branch lifting |
| ⌘ Reduce size a little | ⌘ Neglect for years |
| ⌘ Some branch lifting | |

Natural Pruning

Thinning

- ✓removal of entire cane or section of cane
- ✓opens up the shrub to admit light
- ✓reduces overall height and promotes regrowth



Natural Look Pruning

- ⌘ Know a plants natural growth habit (form)
- ⌘ **Cane**-forsythia, rose, weigela, lilac, mock orange, nandina, hydrangea
- ⌘ **Mound**-abelias, barberry, spirea, r. rose, holly, escallonia, hebe, choisya, azalea
- ⌘ **Upright**-rhodies, viburnum, camellia

Natural Pruning

⌘ Cane Growers

- ⌘ Remove dead wood
- ⌘ Cut out 1/3-1/4 of largest or oldest canes annually
- ⌘ Prune to open using thinning cuts

Natural Pruning Cane Forming



Natural Pruning Cane Forming



Natural Pruning

- ⌘ **Mound shaped**
- ⌘ Often used in mass plantings, have small leaves and branches, hardy
- ⌘ Don't shear them, just cut back the longest branches below the outer edge
- ⌘ Cut some older branches to the base

Mound Forming Shrubs



Mound Forming Shrubs



Natural Pruning



Natural Pruning

- ⌘ Upright shaped
- ⌘ Let these shrubs get big, don't dwarf
- ⌘ Selective thinning to open
- ⌘ Don't remove more than 1/8 leaf surface annually, it will cause water-sprouting
- ⌘ Prune branches off ground, crossing limbs out and top reduction to outward branch

Camellia



Upright Shaped



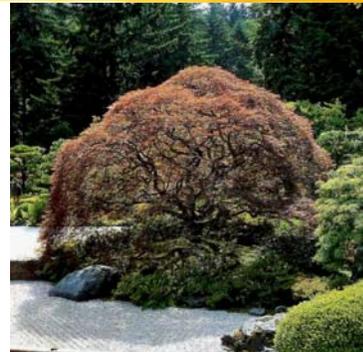
When to Prune Shrubs

- ⌘ Mostly dependent on flowering
- ⌘ Spring bloomer- prune after flowering
- ⌘ Summer bloomer- prune during dormancy

New Wood Versus Old Wood

- ⌘ If flowers are formed on new wood you generally prune during dormancy
- ⌘ If flowers are formed on old wood you prune after flowering

Natural Tree Pruning



Natural Tree Pruning

- ⌘ Have an idea of natural growth pattern
- ⌘ Selectively thin to keep tree canopy open, you want to see the trunk and branches
- ⌘ Light pruning annually reduces sprouting
- ⌘ Remove crossing limbs, dead wood, branches on ground

Tree Growth Habit Dictates Head Height



Pruning Ornamental Trees

- ⌘ Questions to ask yourself:
- ⌘ What form is natural?
- ⌘ Do I like leaves, bark, flowers, berries?
- ⌘ When does the tree flower?

Unnatural Tree Pruning



Unnatural Tree Pruning



When Should I Prune?

- ⌘ Most deciduous ornamentals should be pruned during dormancy
- ⌘ Spring flowering trees: light pruning after flowering ok. (crabapple, dogwood, redbud, golden chain)
- ⌘ Summer pruning ok to remove watersprouts, suckers, or to train

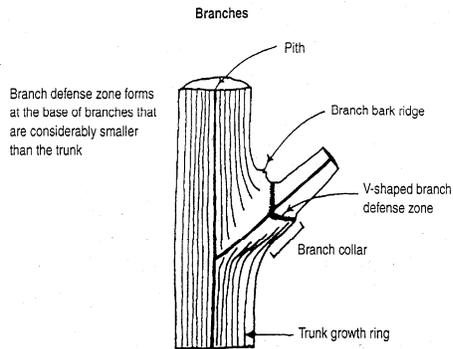
Pruning Deciduous Shade Trees

- ⌘ Objectives of pruning shade trees:
- ⌘ Remove branches that are dead, dying, broken or diseased
- ⌘ Correct faults
- ⌘ Prune during dormancy

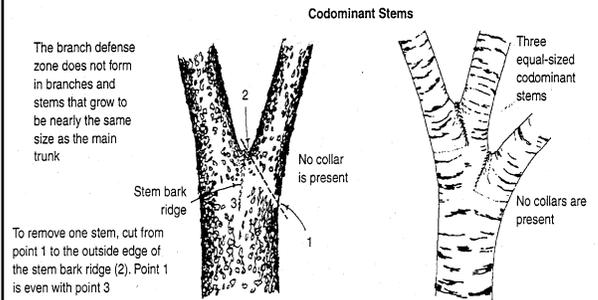
Correctable Faults

- ⌘ Multiple leaders
- ⌘ Flat tops
- ⌘ Forks
- ⌘ Suckers
- ⌘ Included bark
- ⌘ Rubbing branches
- ⌘ Codominant stems
- ⌘ Water sprouts
- ⌘ Diseased branches
- ⌘ Dense canopy
- ⌘ Dead wood
- ⌘ Clustered branches
- ⌘ Broken branches
- ⌘ Insect infested

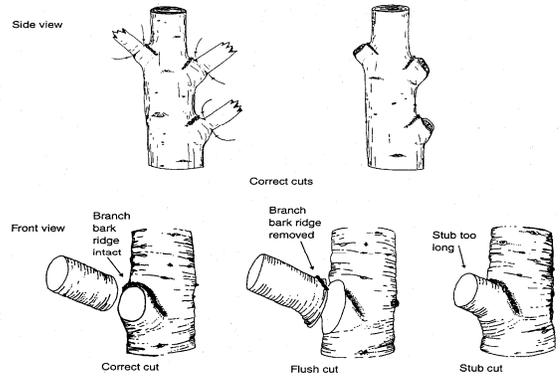
Branch Defense Zone



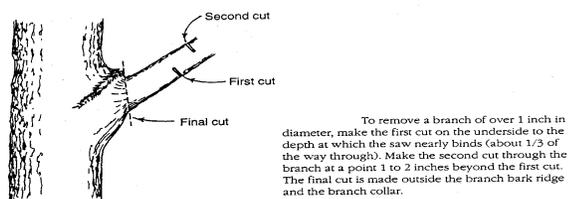
Codominant Stems



Locating the Right Cut

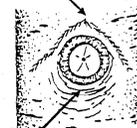


Proper Sequence of Cuts



Proper

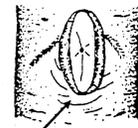
Branch bark ridge intact



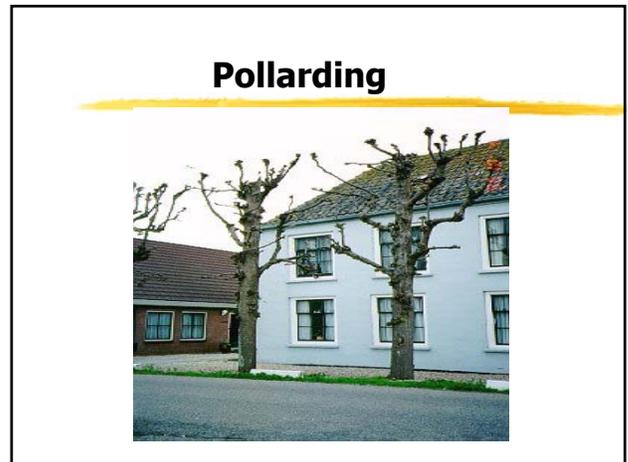
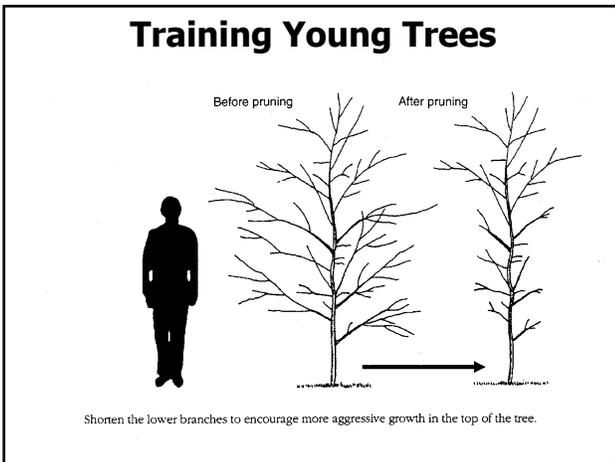
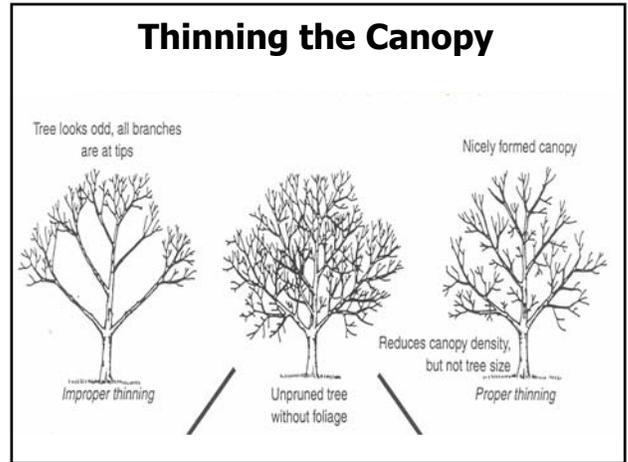
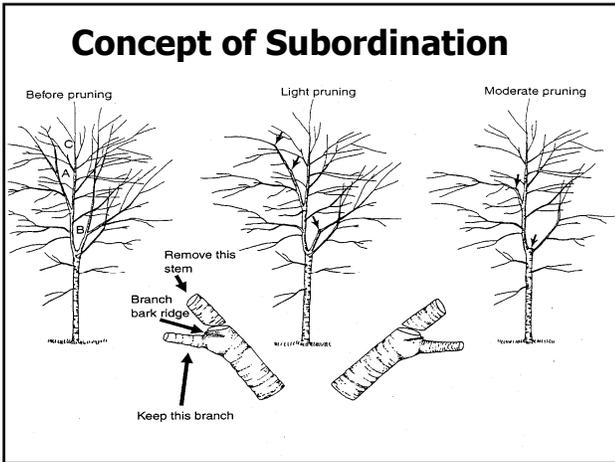
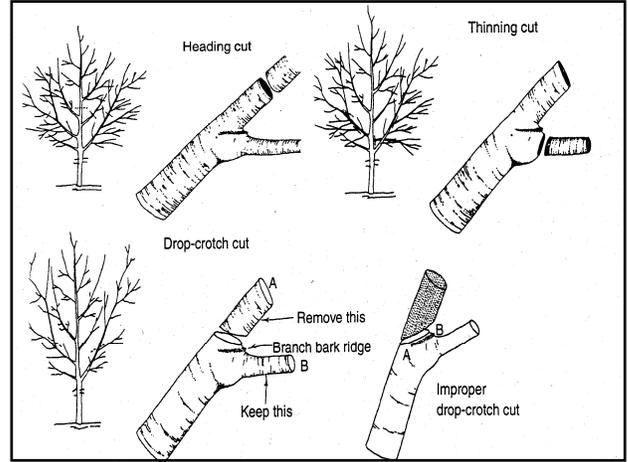
Circular-shaped woundwood closing over cut

Improper

Branch bark ridge removed from trunk

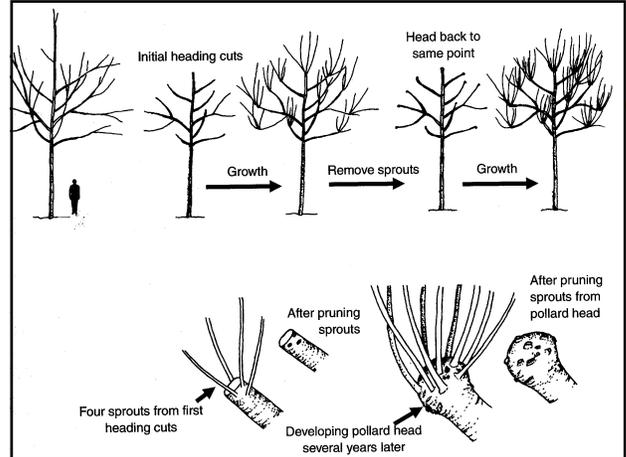


Oval-shaped woundwood closing over cut



Pollarding

- ⌘ A pruning art form used to keep large trees at a fixed size
- ⌘ The practice began in Europe as a way to harvest wood without killing the tree
- ⌘ Pollarding requires annual pruning care



This Is Not Pollarding



Scale Foliage Conifers



- Calocedrus: Incense Cedar
- Chamecyparis: Hinoki cypress
Leyland cypress
- Juniperus: many species
- Thuja: arborvitae

Scale Foliage Conifers

- ⌘ Can take light pruning
- ⌘ Don't prune into older un-needed wood
- ⌘ Junipers will die if you try to renovate
- ⌘ Yews can take some severe pruning

Needle Foliage Conifers

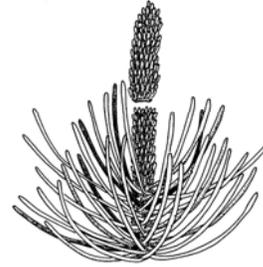


- Abies: true firs
- Cedrus: true cedars
- Picea: spruces
- Pines: pines
- Pseudotsuga: D. fir
- Tsuga: hemlock

Needle Foliage Conifers

- ⌘ To dwarf a plant or make compact pinch back new growth at the candle stage
- ⌘ Do not cut into old un-needed parts of the stem

Pine Pruning-Candling



Chain Saw Massacre



Lyre or Trident Pruning



Hedging



Planning a Hedge

- ⌘ Planning and layout make hedges thrive
- ⌘ The right plant in the right place
- ⌘ Sheared or Natural
- ⌘ What height

Good Hedge Plants

- ⌘ Low <3', boxwood, Japanese spirea, privet
- ⌘ Medium 3-6', yew, privet, burning bush
- ⌘ High >6', arborvitae, hedge maple, hornbeam, E. hemlock, European beech

Sheared Hedge



Non Sheared Hedge



Occasionally Trimmed Hedges

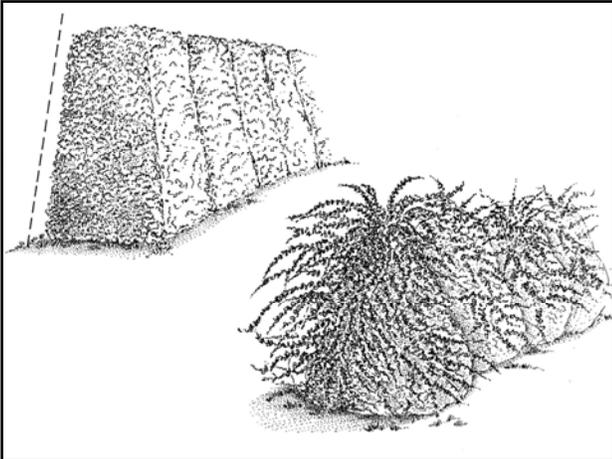


Pruning a Hedge

- ⌘ New shrubs cut off half to two-thirds
- ⌘ Every year cut off about one-third of the new growth to keep the hedge thick
- ⌘ Arborvitae and Juniper don't top if you want them to be columnar

Pruning Mature Hedges

- ⌘ Stretch a line at desired height of hedge
- ⌘ Use a line level on line
- ⌘ Cut large branches a few inches below your level line
- ⌘ Keep the hedge wider at the bottom, stretch a line along bottom edge as a guide. Bottom 8-12" wider than top
- ⌘ Shear top then the sides (spring)



Renovating Hedges

- ⌘ Too wide and tall, cut back to 2-3" shorter than the desired size over whole hedge
- ⌘ Leggy or thin, cut back to 6-12" tall, deciduous shrubs and yews
- ⌘ Evergreens that are overgrown, start over

Hedges



Coppicing



Coppicing

- ⌘ Cutting a shrub or tree to the ground annually, practice began 3-5,000 yrs ago
- ⌘ Promotes bright stem color, bold foliage, intense variegation, prolific flowering
- ⌘ Must know how your species will react

Coppicing Technique

- ⌘ Cut back existing wood to 3-5" above soil, leave a few leaf buds if possible
- ⌘ Let plant get established for one year before topping
- ⌘ Prune about one month before new growth usually begins

Coppicing in Western Oregon

- ⌘ Late February to mid March but make sure the worst of winter is past
- ⌘ If you prefer you can coppice every other year depending on the vigor of the plant
- ⌘ Tools: hand saw, loppers, hand pruner

Plants for Coppicing

- ⌘ Accentuate leaf variegation: Catalpa, Cotinus, Sambucus, cornus, Weigela
- ⌘ Tree habit changed to bush: Catalpa, Mimosa, Tamarix, Eucalyptus, Cotinus
- ⌘ Increase flowers or fruit: Buddleia, Caryopteris, Hydrangea, Autumn sage

Vines



Wisteria

- ⌘ Wisteria can be left to ramble but will become very heavy and untidy
- ⌘ Best to prune in two seasons
- ⌘ **Summer**-July or August cut back shoots to 10-12", this helps get sunlight to wood
- ⌘ **Winter**-February cut back shoots to three to five buds

Summer Pruning



Winter Pruning



Winter Pruning



Wisteria Renovation

- ⌘ Decide what plant shape is desired
- ⌘ Reduce to main trunk and a few side branches over a three year period
- ⌘ The more you prune the more re-growth occurs, do a lot of shoot thinning to direct growth after renovation

Clematis



Clematis

- ⌘ Clematis are put in three pruning groups
- ⌘ **Group 1:** small flowered species, flower early spring on last seasons growth
- ⌘ **Group 2:** Large flowered cultivars, flower in May-June on short laterals from last yr and some bloom again in late summer on current seasons growth
- ⌘ **Group 3:** Large flowered cultivars and small flowered species that bloom late summer on current years growth

Clematis Pruning, Group 1

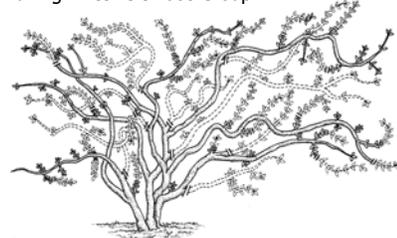
- ⌘ *C. alpina, C. armandi, C. cirrhosa, C. macropetala, C. montana*
- ⌘ Minimal, remove dead stems and prune plants back to their space after flowering
- ⌘ Renovation, cut back to 10-12" tall immediately after flowering

Clematis Pruning, Group 2

- ⌘ Large flowering hybrids: Nelly Moser, Silver Moon, H.F. Young, Moonlight, Dr. Ruppel, etc.
- ⌘ Remove dead stems in early spring before growth begins (Feb-Mar), trim remaining stems to 2 healthy buds near top of vine
- ⌘ After flowering you can cut vine back 50% to increase flowering for next year

Clematis

Pruning vines: *Clematis* Group 2



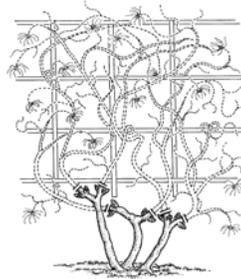
- ✓ Remove weak growths
- ✓ Thin stems to well-spaced framework

Clematis Pruning, Group 3

- ⌘ C. Comtesse de Bouchard, C. Jackmanii, C. viticella (Etoile violette), C. texensis (C. Gravetye Beauty), C. integrifolia,
- ⌘ Cut back all growth to 6-12" tall in early spring before growth begins. Cut back to two healthy buds
- ⌘ These plants can be pruned to the ground

Clematis

Pruning *Clematis* Group 3



- ✓ Prune low to a pair of strong buds early spring
- ✓ Remove dead stems

References:

- ⌘ Gilman, E. (1997) An Illustrated Guide to Pruning, Delmar Publishers ISBN/ISSN:0-8273-8040-2
- ⌘ The Royal Horticultural Society, Additional information on pruning shrubs and vines. www.rhs.org.uk/advice
- ⌘ Turnbull, C. (1999-2001). Various Articles on Pruning; www.plantamnesty.org
- ⌘ Joyce, D. (2001) Pruning and Training Plants; Firefly Books Ltd. ISBN:1-55297-534-7