

How To Prune Checklist

When to Prune

1. Prune deciduous trees in late winter or early spring before new growth begins.
2. Prune coniferous trees during the dormant season in late winter or early spring.
3. Limit pruning during the growing season (spring and summer) to removing dead, diseased, or broken branches.

Pruning Techniques and Considerations

1. Crown Thinning

- Use this technique to improve tree structure and appearance by reducing weight and wind resistance in the crown.
- This technique also improves light penetration and air circulation to prevent disease and pests.

2. Removing Dead Branches

- Look for signs like lack of leaves, peeling bark, fungi growth, absence of buds, brittle texture, discoloration, and decay.

3. Branches Growing Toward Trees Center or Crossing Other Branches

- Remove these branches to maintain the tree's natural shape and structure.
- This also helps to increase light penetration and air circulation, and prevent disease and pests.

4. Heading

- Use this technique to control the size and shape of trees, and promote a denser appearance.
- Make cuts just above a bud or side shoot.
- Be cautious not to overdo it as it can reduce light penetration and air circulation, and make the plant more susceptible to disease and pests.

5. Height Reduction

- Prune trees for height reduction for safety reasons, to avoid obstruction of views, for aesthetic purposes, or to improve tree's overall stability and health.
- This also helps keep fruit within a reasonable reach for harvest.

6. Crown Lifting

- Remove lower branches to increase clearance between the ground and the lowest branches.
- This can increase visibility, reduce risk of tripping, allow more light and air to reach the ground, and improve tree's appearance.

7. Sprouts Forming Off Base Of Trunk

- Prune sprouts off the base of a trunk to reduce competition for resources, and to reduce the risk of further damage or infection to the tree.

8. Multiple Leaders

- Prune multiple leaders from a tree to reduce stress on the tree and improve its stability.

Remember to always prioritize tree health, stability, and growth when making pruning decisions.