

A how to guide for Pruning Trees

For trees to remain in good health and to prevent wind damage, an annual pruning of trees is required. The dead of winter is an ideal season to prune trees, for during this time trees will be the least susceptible to fungal infection, insect infestation, and stress via open cuts made by pruning. What will be shown, prior to touching a branch, is knowing the proper tools to be had, the branches to be pruned, and best method to prune these branches from the trees.

Caution: Safety goggles and leather gloves should be worn before handling tools.

Tools:



The pruning shears are for the smallest width branches and may prune branches up to a half inch in diameter.



The lopping shears are for the thicker in width branches and are used to prune branches from a half inch to an inch in diameter.



The pruning saw is for any branches thicker than an inch diameter.



For any branches beyond arms reach, a pruning saw attached to a pole is a preferred option than using a ladder.

The branches to be pruned from trees are the ones removed that promote the tree's sturdiness, health, and aesthetic value and those branches to be pruned are:



Pruning the branches within the canopy are to thin its denseness allowing a favorable passing of light and air circulation. This is intended to maintain a tree's structure and form and to prevent risk of fungal infection due excess moisture due to lack of air flow and light. Thinning the canopy also leaves trees less susceptible to wind damage.



With crisscrossing branches one or the both need to be pruned, it is dependent on whether how much of the bark is rubbed off from either branch. Bark removal leaves a tree open to insect infestation or arboreal diseases.



With the pruning of co-dominate branches the reduction of a tree's risk to wind damage is minimized, bark rubbing gone, and tree's sturdiness increased.



To protect the tree's health and to maintain their aesthetics always prune dead or diseased branches from trees.

Pruning Methods Preventing Harm to Trees



Prune parallel just outside the branch collar thus avoiding injury to stem tissue so the wound can heal in the shortest time possible. With pruning shears and loppers, a one cut method is all that is needed.

When pruning larger branches, a 3 cut method is needed with a pruning saw.

The *first* cut should be about three inches from the bark collar and nearly half-way through the branch; do not sever the limb completely. This cut prevent bark tearing.



The *second* cut is to sever the limb just below the first cut, relieving tension for final cut.



The *third* and final cut is to saw the stub off parallel to the branch collar.

