

Pruning Shrubs & Evergreens

Pruning can be an intimidating garden task for some people. But, by following a few simple rules, you can easily tackle all your pruning projects.

Why do we prune shrubs?

Pruning is done to maintain a shrub's size, improve flowering, fruiting, or bark color, and to remove damaged or diseased branches.



First, determine what time of year to prune.

Spring-flowering shrubs (Lilac, Forsythia): prune right after flowering.

Summer-flowering shrubs (Potentilla, Spirea): prune when dormant.

Damaged or diseased branches: remove when they are found.

Next, decide what type of pruning is needed.

Some shrubs, like Lilacs, benefit from regular pruning and other, like Barberries, require little pruning. For pruning information, check the plant tag or call any of our garden centers.

Some common types of pruning are-

Thinning: reduce the size and density of a shrub by pruning some of the branches where they join the main trunk. Thinning improves flowering, fruiting, and bark color. It can also reduce some disease problems.

Heading cuts: reduce the height and spread of a shrub. Prune branches back to a shorter side shoot or above a healthy bud. Vary your cuts to maintain a natural appearance.

Renewal: used to manage over grown shrubs and to promote new growth. Remove 1/3 of the older branches at ground level and reduce the height of the remaining stems by 1/3 if necessary. Continue to remove older branches each year as needed.

Malmborg's is committed to providing quality, locally grown plants and personal service. Stop by any of our three locations and let our knowledgeable staff assist you in finding the perfect flower, plant or accent piece to turn your space into your own personal garden retreat.

Garden Center Locations

20045 County Road 81
Rogers, MN 55311
(763) 428-2061

5120 N. Lilac Drive
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429
(763) 535-4695

2456 125th Ave. NE
Blaine, MN 55449

Pruning Calendar

November - February

Prune winter damaged branches as necessary.

February - March

Prune summer and fall blooming shrubs until new growth appears.

March - May

Wait to prune spring-flowering shrubs until after they bloom. Finish by June.

July

Lightly shear Spireas to remove faded flowers and encourage re-bloom; repeat for a third bloom.

August - October

Avoid late season pruning, especially of evergreens, which can lead to winter damage from sun and wind.

SEASONAL CARE FOR **TREES & SHRUBS** IN NORTHERN U.S. CLIMATES

	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
BUDS SWELL				
LEAVES EMERGE				
LEAVES FULL SIZE				
LEAVES TURN				
LEAVES DROP				
SOIL FROZEN				
WATER		WATER IS ESSENTIAL IN SUMMER & DROUGHT.		REDUCES WINTER DAMAGE.
MULCH		MAINTAIN A RING OF MULCH (2" - 4" DEEP) AROUND THE TREE BUT NOT AGAINST THE TRUNK.		
PRUNE	FOR SOME PLANTS, PRUNING OR REMOVAL DURING THIS TIME REQUIRES SPECIAL CARE TO PREVENT DISEASE TRANSMISSION.			
FERTILIZE		APPLY LOW RATES OF NITROGEN IF NECESSARY		
PROTECT TRUNK	MULCH OR PLASTIC GUARDS MAY BE USED TO PREVENT DAMAGE FROM MOWERS OR OTHER LAWN EQUIPMENT.		APPLY IF NEEDED. USE HARDWARE CLOTH, 3" FROM THE TRUNK.	
MONITOR HEALTH & SAFETY	ANIMAL AND SNOW/ICE DAMAGE	INSECT AND DISEASE PROBLEMS		ANIMAL AND SNOW/ICE DAMAGE

PREFERRED
DEPENDS ON SITUATION
NOT ADVISED

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Pruning Evergreens

Evergreens can require special attention when pruning to avoid damage to the plant.

Pines: grow from the stem tips each year. To control growth, remove 1/2 - 2/3 of the buds (candles) in the spring. More severe pruning can kill the branch.

Spruce: prune in the spring by cutting the stem tips back to a healthy bud.

Arborvitae & Yew: tolerates more severe pruning than Pine or Spruce. Prune in spring before new growth or in early summer after the growth has expanded. Prune branches back to a bud or side branch. Or, for a

Avoid pruning evergreens in late summer and fall. New growth and inner growth can be damaged by winter sun and wind.

hedge, shear plants keeping them wider on the bottom. This allows light to reach all parts of the plant.

Juniper: require little pruning when varieties are carefully selected for the space they will be growing in. Remove selected branches in the spring and early summer.



Buckthorn

Removing Invasive Shrubs

Sometimes, keeping shrubs healthy may require removing invasive shrubs that can crowd them. In Minnesota, one of the most common invasive shrubs is Buckthorn.

Buckthorn can be identified by a small thorn on the end of the branches. They may have clusters of small, black berries and usually leaf out earlier than other plants in the spring and hold their leaves longer in the fall.

To remove, cut large plants back to the ground and treat stump with a total vegetation killer like Roundup. Small plants can be killed by applying a herbicide 12"-15" along the stem. Read all herbicide directions carefully.

For more information: Koetter, Rebecca, Gary R. Johnson, and Dave Hanson. "Seasonal Care for Trees and Shrubs in Northern U.S. Climates." My Minnesota Woods. University of Minnesota Forest Resources Extension, 9 Jan. 2009. Web. 28 Dec. 2012. <<http://www.myminnesotawoods.umn.edu/2008/04/seasonal-care-for-trees-and-shrubs-in-northern-u-s-climates-2/>>.

Myers, Melinda, and Chuck Levine. Month-by-month Gardening in Minnesota. Nashville, TN: Cool Springs, 2001. Print.