

# The Basics of Pruning

Proper pruning can enhance the natural beauty of many trees and shrubs. It is an essential practice in maintaining healthy plants. On the other hand, improper pruning of trees and shrubs can destroy their beauty, and weaken their ability to survive. The right tools and technique can make a big difference.



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## Why Prune Trees?

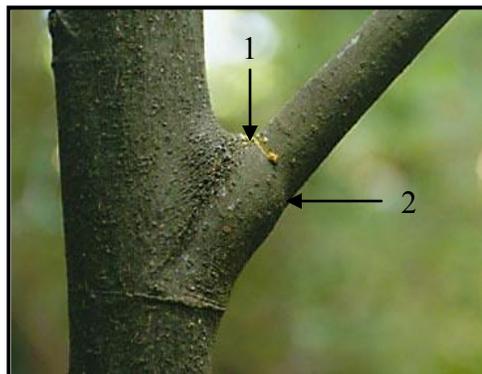
**Safety:** To remove branches that could cause injury or interfere with utility lines and other infrastructure

**Health:** To remove diseased or dead branches, and to enhance growth by improving structure

**Fruit Production:** To increase sun exposure, air circulation, and energy distribution.

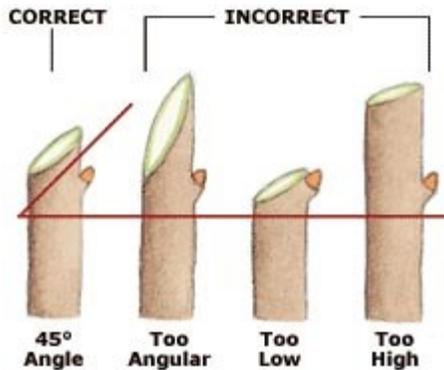
**Appearance:** To improve shape, direct growth, control plant size, and enhance views.

## Where to Make the Cut



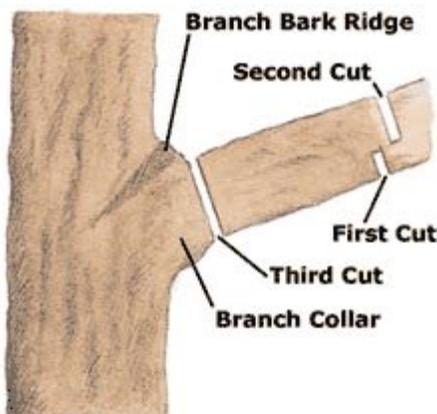
While pruning a branch, the proper cut is made from the branch bark ridge (1) to the end of the branch collar (2).

# The Basics of Pruning



## Small Twigs

To prune smaller twigs and branches, make a clean cut on a 45° angle, slightly above a lateral bud. The wrong cut can cause wounds that do not heal properly, leaving the tree stressed, and susceptible to disease or infection.



## Large Branches

When pruning branches that are larger than 1 inch in diameter, it is important to make a 3 part cut to prevent bark ripping. The first cut is a partial cut made from below, which stops any ripping. The second cut removes the branch. The third cut removes the remaining stub without damaging the branch collar.

## The Proper Tools are Important

- Quality bypass hand pruners, pruning saws, bypass lopping shears, and pole pruners are all acceptable pruning tools. Chain saws can be used to prune large branches when hand tools are too small for the job.
- Blades should be sharpened or replaced as they become dull.
- Tools should be cleaned and sanitized often to prevent the spread of disease from infected trees to healthy ones.

