

# PRUNING

HOUSTON PLANTS & GARDEN WORLD



## PRUNING FOR TREES AND SHRUBS

Pruning is an accepted practice for fruit trees and is a regular activity with rose bushes.

Beyond that, pruning a tree or trimming a shrub should be done to train the plant, maintain plant health, improve quality of fruit or flowers, or to restrict growth.

Hand pruning is good on branches up to one half inch in diameter. Make sure the blades are clean to prevent disease transmission and sharp for the best cut.

Loping shears have long handles and are operated with both hands. Lopers easily cut through branches two inches or better.

Hedge shears can be either manual, gas or electric powered. Electric models are most popular for home use.

When pruning twigs and small branches, always cut back to a vigorous bud or an intersecting branch. When cutting back to a bud, choose a bud that is pointing in the direction you want the new growth to take. Make a slanted right angle cut to prevent water from collecting on the cut and also to promote healing.

Thick and heavy branches should be removed flush to the collar at the base of the branch, not flush with the trunk. Use a 3-part cut to prevent the branch from breaking before the cut is complete.

For most evergreen shrubs, thinning out is the best pruning procedure. Some evergreens can be sheared for a formal look and is best done in late winter before new growth begins.

### Pruning tips

- Keep your tools oiled and cleaned and choose the right pruning tool for the job.
- Never, ever, top a tree by cutting it back to a few large branches.
- Always cut on an angle and use a 3-part cut for larger branches.
- Timing is important when pruning shrubs that bloom. Visit with one of our nursery professionals for more information, We're here to help!

  
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