

# Pruning Landscape Plants

Pruning is a horticultural practice that alters the form and growth of a plant; it can also be considered preventative maintenance. Many problems may be prevented by pruning correctly during formative years for a tree or shrub

## Reasons for Pruning

To Promote Plant Health

- Remove dead or dying branches injured by disease, severe insect infestation, animals, storms, or other adverse damage
- Remove branches and branch stubs that rub together

To Improve Visual Aesthetics

- encourages flower and fruit development
- maintaining or improving dense hedges
- control plant size
- maintain desired plant proportions

To Protect People and Property

- prune branches that are hanging over your property line or encroaching on public side walks
- for safety, prune shrubs that obscure entrances to your home, like walkways or doors.

## Timing of Pruning

Shrubs that **bloom early in the season** on last years growth should be pruned immediately after they finish blooming

Chokeberry	Weigela	Early Blooming Spirea
Forsythia	Lilac	Double Flowering Plum
Saskatoon	Elder	Golden Current

Shrubs grown **primarily for their foliage** should be pruned in spring before growth begins

Alpine Currant	Barberry	Burning Bush
Cistena Cherry	Dogwood	Honeysuckle
Ninebark	Smokebush	Sumac

Shrubs that **bloom on new growth** may be pruned in spring before growth begins. Plants with marginally hardy stems such as clematis and shrub roses should be pruned back to live wood.

## Pruning Hedges

After the initial pruning at planting, hedges need to be pruned often. once the hedge reached the desired height, prune new grow back whenever it grows another 6-8 inches. Prune to within 2 inches of the last pruning. Hedges may be pruned twice a year, in spring and again in mid-summer, to keep them dense and attractive.

## Pruning Evergreens

With very few exceptions, evergreens (conifers) require little to no pruning. Different types of evergreens should be pruned according to their varied growth habits.

**PINES** seldom need pruning, but if you want to promote more dense growth, remove up to two-thirds of the length of newly expanded candles. Don't prune further back than the current years growth

**CEDARS & JUNIPERS** grow continuously throughout the growing season. They can be pruned any time through the middle of summer. Even though these plants will tolerate heavy shearing, their natural form is usually most desirable, so prune only to correct growth defects.