



Fruit Tree Pruning

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Why Do We Prune Fruit Trees?

- Tree Health
- Shape/Form, Direct Growth
- Promote Fruit Growth
 - Size of individual fruit
 - Sweeter, better tasting fruit





Timing Is Important

Better to prune when the tree is dormant.

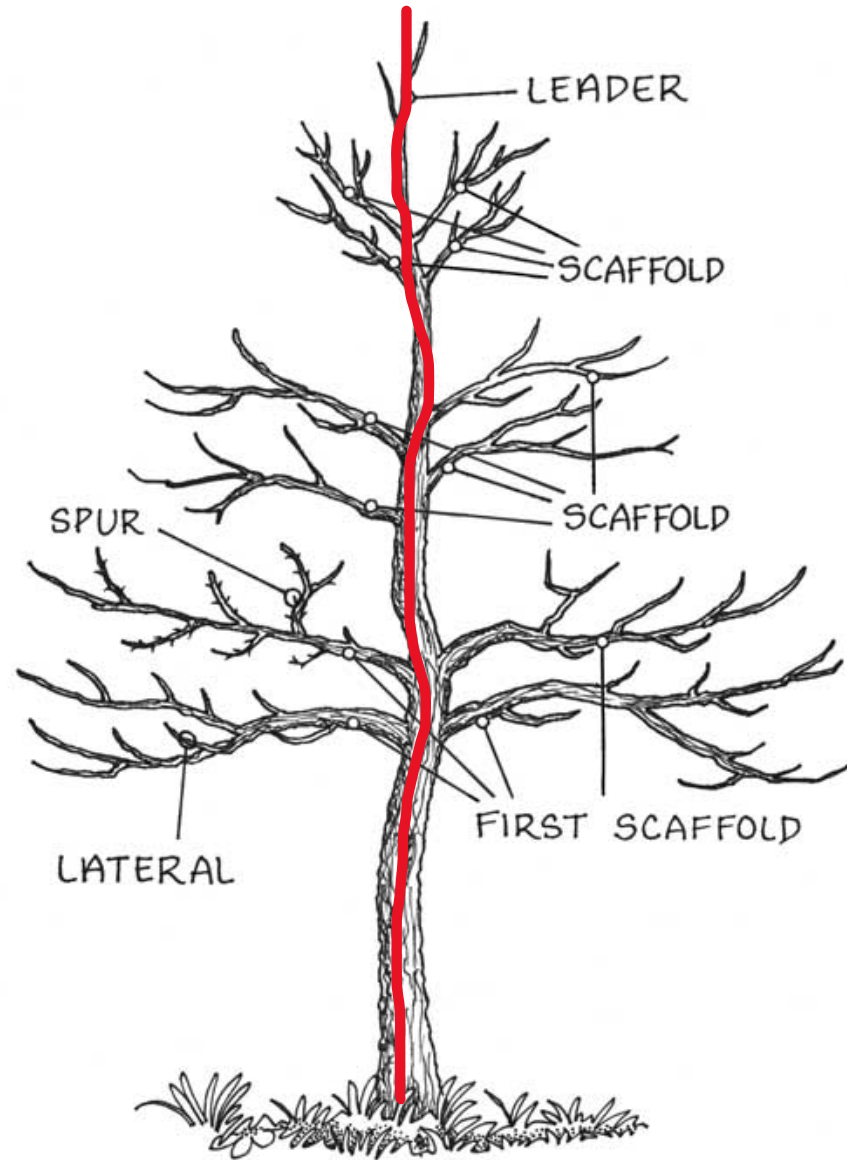
Dormant pruning allows:

- To see the structure of the tree
- For tree to stimulate new growth

Dormant pruning discourages disease and pest related problems.

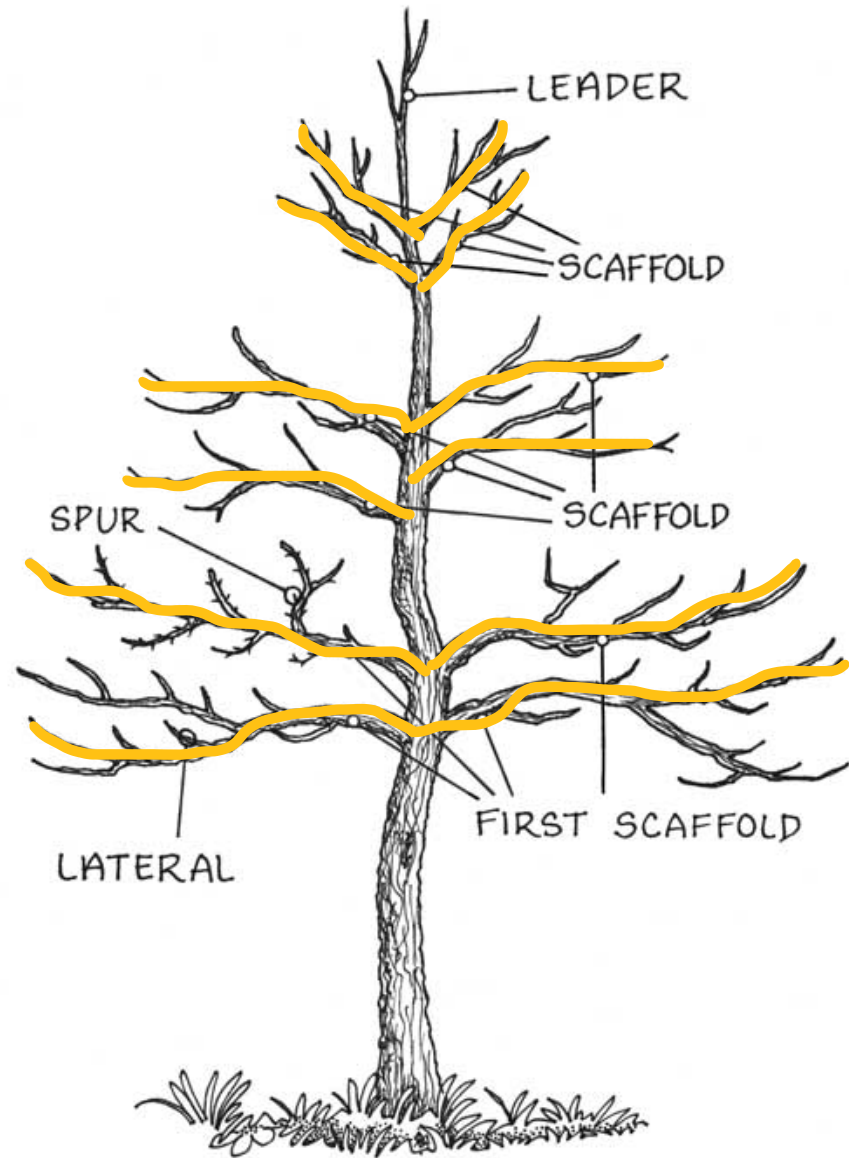
Terminology: Parts of the Tree

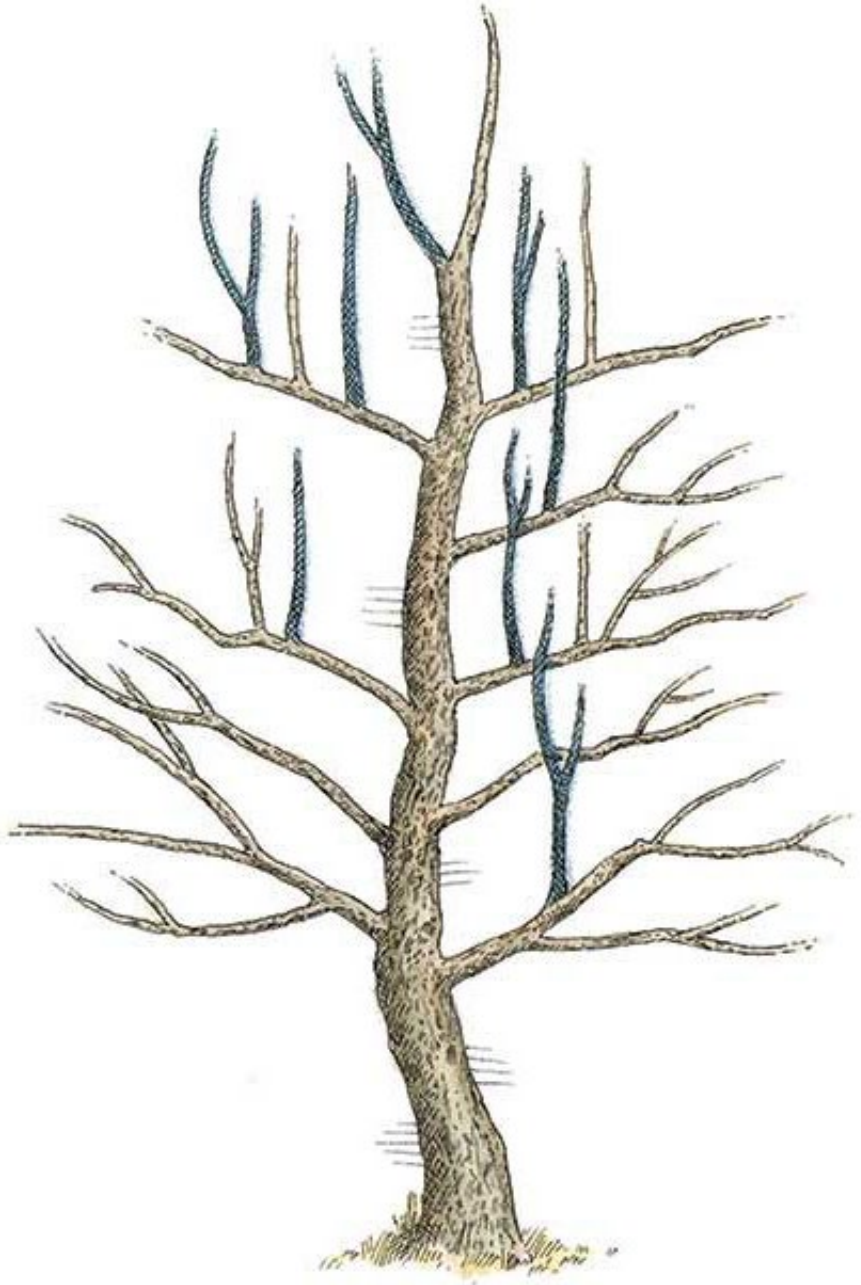
LEADER= Central Trunk



Terminology: Parts of the Tree

SCAFFOLD= Main branches originating from the Leader





Terminology: Parts of the Tree

WATER SPROUT=
Adventitious lateral branches
generally growing vertically.

Grown as a response to heavy pruning.



Terminology: Parts of the Tree

SUCKERS= Vertical shoots that grow from root.

Grown as a response to pruning or stress. On grafted trees these suckers will be the same as the root stock which typically is not the same as the fruit you want to grow.

Photo source: Purdue University,
<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/so-long-suckers/>



Terminology: Parts of the Tree

SPURS= Fruiting bearing stems of the tree

Photo source: Simply Trees

<https://simplytreesut.blogspot.com/2013/02/what-is-spur.html>



Terminology: Parts of the Tree

Branch Bark Ridge= The raised “wrinkled” bark at the joint of a branch and leader/scaffold. Indicates a strong branch connection

Branch Collar= The external edge of the branch bark ridge.



PRUNING TOOLS

Hand Pruners

- ONLY USE BYPASS PRUNERS!!!
- Good for smaller branches and stems. Up to $\frac{3}{4}$ "
- Keep them sharp, clean and adjusted.



Loppers

- ONLY USE BYPASS LOPPERS!!!
- Compound loppers are gimmicky
- Good for medium branches and for reaching.
3/4" to 1-1/2"
- Keep them sharp, clean and adjusted.



Pole Pruners

- ONLY USE BYPASS PRUNERS!!!
- Used to reach into interior of tree.
- Good for medium branches and for reaching.
3/4" to 1-1/2"
- Keep them sharp, clean and adjusted.



Hand saws

- Best tool in the toolbox
- Make sure to know if saw is pull-action only
- Good for every size branch
- Keep clean.



PRUNING BASICS

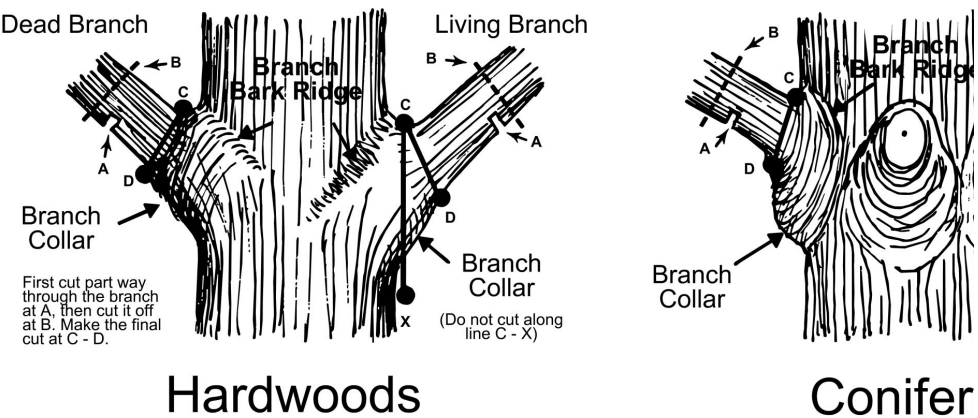


What To Cut

Look for the following:

- Dead branches
- Diseased branches
- Dangerous branches
- Crossing branches
- Competing branches

Proper Pruning Principles





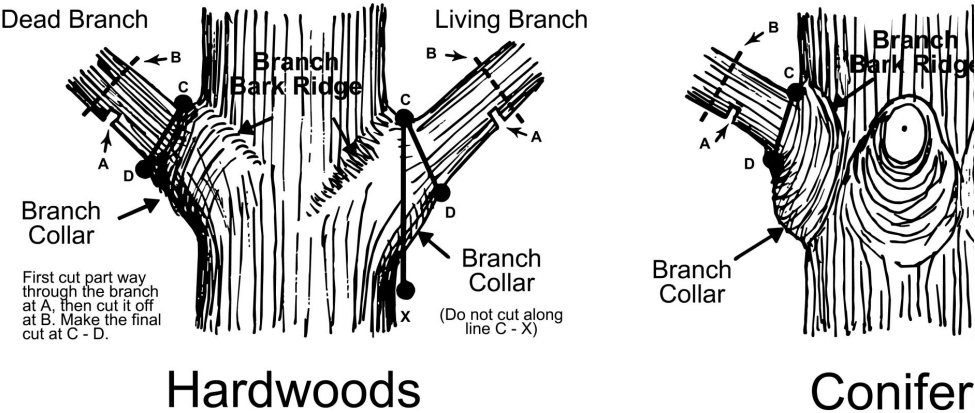
Where To Cut

When making a cut, cut on the branch side of the branch collar.

If cutting a large branch, use the 3 cut method to prevent bark ripping.

Keep the blade of your pruner/lopper on the side of the cut you are keeping.

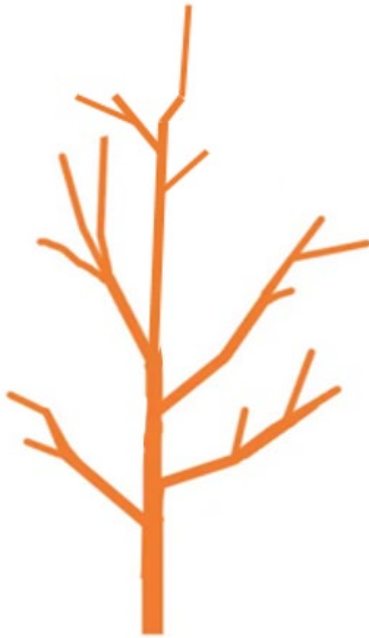
Proper Pruning Principles



Tree Shape and Form

What shape or form are you after?

Can you make a few cuts to direct growth to support that form?



Central leader
Apples



Modified Central Leader
Apples, pears, cherries



Open vase
Peaches, stone fruit

Fruit Trees Are Pruned Differently

When pruning ask yourself these questions before making any cuts:

1. What plant is it?
2. Where does the fruit grow?
3. How does the plant grow? Bloom time?
4. How big do I want the plant to get?

Peach Trees

When pruning ask yourself these questions before making any cuts:

1. What plant is it? **Peach**
2. Where does the fruit grow? **Last year's growth**
3. How does the plant grow? **Open Vase Form**
Bloom time? **Spring**
4. How big do I want the plant to get? **Able to pick fruit without a ladder**

Apple Trees

When pruning ask yourself these questions before making any cuts:

1. What plant is it? **Apple**
2. Where does the fruit grow? **2 year + old wood can be on spurs.**
3. How does the plant grow? **Central Leader or Modified Central Leader** Bloom time? **Spring**
4. How big do I want the plant to get? **Able to pick fruit with a short ladder**