

5 Dos and 5 Don'ts for Successful Ornamental Pruning

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PRUNING - WHY?	DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a pleasing shape. - Encourage flowers, fruit, or new growth. - Keep the plant off your house, garage, gutters, neighboring plants, etc... - Better sunlight and air flow. - Address pests and/or diseases. - Keep growth and vigor consistent throughout the plant. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clean and sharpen your tools 2) Know the plant's name 3) Know your why 4) Know the plant's budget 5) Know the right timing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Don't cut in random places 2) Don't create stubs or rips 3) Don't cut the collar 4) Don't twist your tool 5) Don't prune below 38F

1) DO: Clean and sharpen your tools

<p>Clean your tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wipe any of the following on tools for 10 seconds = sanitized. 70% Rubbing alcohol Hydrogen peroxide 10 water:1 bleach solution - When you're done using your tools for the day, clean them one more time. Then oil them with machine oil (3-in-1 oil) to prevent corrosion before putting them away. <p>Tool cleaning video www.corehomefruit.com</p>	<p>Sharpen your tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a single cut bastard file. - Match the angle on the blade of your tool. - Dull tools crush versus cut branches. - Crushed branches can become weak, diseased, or die.
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2) DO: Know the plant's name

- Accurately identify the plant before you make any cuts.
- General is okay i.e. "rose"
- Specific is better i.e. "nootka rose" Find the plant tag.
- No tag? Take pictures of your plant to a local nursery, Google Images, local FB plant pages, etc...
- Different plants have different pruning needs, risks, and tolerances.
- Learn the about the plant BEFORE pruning.
- Put in the time: Plant time is different than human time.
- 1 hour of research now versus waiting 2-10 years for something to grow back.

GOAL:
Work with, not against,
your plants.

REMEMBER:
Plant time is different
than human time.

3) DO: Know your why

- What are your short and long goals for this plant?
- Don't have a clear reason for pruning a plant? Then don't prune it.
- Random reasons lead to random results.
- Respect that the plant is alive and moving through its own cycles throughout the year.
- When in doubt, leave the plant alone.

4) DO: Know the plant's pruning budget

- Different plants have different pruning minimums and maximums.
- Some plant require regular pruning.
- Some plants require no pruning at all.
- Do you get to use the entire budget at one time? Maybe – depends on the plant and your goals.

PRUNING BUDGET:
maximum amount
you can prune off
a plant within a
12 month
period.

a.k.a. "Budget"

Examples of plant pruning budgets:

Japanese maple tree: 5-15%
Dogwood tree: 10-30%
Blueberry bush: 20-30%
Apple tree: 25-30%
Rhododendron shrub: 10-50% (depends on variety)
Rose: 50-90% (depends on variety)
Grape vine: 90%
Daphne: avoid pruning

Book for plant pruning
budgets and timing:

Pruning & Training,
Christopher Brickell &
David Joyce,
DK Publishing

5) DO: Know the right timing

- Different plants need to be pruned at different times.
- Timing affects health, vigor, beauty, fruiting, flowering, rate of grow back, risk of death, etc...
- Again, ask yourself, WHY are you pruning this plant?
- Your "why" will help determine the best "when" to prune.
- Respect the plant's pruning budget.

GOAL:
Combine the plant's budget,
your why,
and the right timing.

1) Don't cut in random places

- Random cuts lead to random results.
- GOAL: every cut made, large or small, is intentional.
- 3 kinds of cuts: bud cuts, collar cuts, 3-part cuts.

<p>Cuts that go back to a BUD = more branches.</p> <p>Cuts that go back to a COLLAR = fewer branches.</p>	<p>3-PART CUT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Safer to cut big branches.- Prevents stubs.- Prevents rips.	<p>Cut #1: 6" away from collar, saw half way through the bottom of the branch.</p> <p>Cut #2: 8" away from collar (2" past cut #1), saw half-whole way through top of branch. Remove branch.</p> <p>Cut #3: Carefully saw off branch stub, leaving the collar intact.</p>
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2) Don't cut the collar

- If you cut the collar, no "donut" will form.
- The cut will not close and always be a weak point.
- Take your time...10mins now versus years or a lifetime of the plant not growing well.

**NEVER NEVER NEVER
cut the collar!**

3) Don't create stubs or rips

- Stubs and rips = no good!
- Stubs become dead wood that can host pests and diseases.
 - Stubs look bad.
 - Rips take a very long time to heal, if ever.
 - Rips look bad.
 - Rips can become stubs.

4) Don't twist your tool

- Twisting = your tool is too small to make a good cut.
- Twisting = crushing, not cutting, the branch.
- Use the right size tool for the job.
- If you're twisting, get a bigger tool.

Pruning Tool Tour video
www.corehomefruit.com

5) Don't prune below 38F

- Trees and branches are mostly water.
- Below 38F branches start to freeze.
- Risk cracking versus cutting branches.

What other PRUNING resources do you want?

Videos?
Remote classes?
In-person Workshops?
Study groups?

Get in touch - contact information below!

**Thank you
and good luck!**