



PRUNING CALENDAR

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* PRUNE CRAPE MYRTLES IN EARLY SPRING BEFORE THEY BREAK DORMANCY

Pruning Calendar for Homeowners by Al Sutherland

PLANT TYPE	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Most deciduous trees & shrubs	XXXX	XXXX			XX	XXXX	XXXX	XX			XX	XXXX
Deciduous bleeders	XXXX						XXXX	XX			X	XXXX
Spring-flowering deciduous trees & shrubs			Prune	when	flower	s fade						
Summer-flowering deciduous shrubs				XXXX	XX							
Roses		XX	XX									
Grapes		XX	XX									
Fruit trees		XX	XX									
Evergreen trees with needle-like leaves -Limbs -Candle Shearing	XXXX			X	X		XXXX	XX				XXXX
Evergreen trees & shrubs with scale leaves -Limbs -Branch Shearing	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XX	XXXX	XXXX			XX	XXXX
Evergreen broadleaf trees & shrubs			XXXX	X								

NOTE: X = Best time frame to prune or trim. The above chart is for most species and times of extensive pruning, while specific species (or training systems or the need for corrective pruning) may necessitate different pruning periods from those listed.

Pruning is one yard activity that is often poorly understood and practiced. Science can provide us the knowledge to understand pruning.

The chart above is a guide listing the ideal pruning times for general plant categories. Pruning times for individual species and plants being trained, such as bonsai or espalier plants, may differ.

Horticulturists have discovered that it is critical to cut off branches on the outside of the branch collar. The branch collar is a raised area surrounding each branch that contains plant cells with the ability to rapidly divide. When a branch is properly removed,

these cells quickly begin cell division to produce new tissue that covers over the cut.

Another item of note is that pruning paints have been shown to slow down the healing process. The recommendation is **not** to use pruning paints.

Proper pruning respects the natural shape of the tree. Each tree species or unique cultivar has its own natural growth pattern.

Topping trees is not pruning. Topping destroys the natural shape of the tree. When a tree is topped, its very existence is threatened. The new proliferation of weak branches

makes the tree more susceptible to wind and ice damage than before.

During any one year, keep your pruning to no more than 1/3 of the initial tree structure.

The following steps maybe helpful in pruning trees:

- 1) Cut off all dead branches and limbs.
- 2) Prune out crossing branches and limbs.
- 3) Remove lower branches to facilitate lawn mowing and improve driver visibility.
- 4) Finally, remove branches to enhance the shape of the tree and thin out the center for better air movement through the tree.