

Principles of Pruning for Structure and Sustainability

With: Tom Ingersoll, MCA & Melissa LeVangie, MCA

Ward's Nursery Spring Class – March 16, 2024



WHY PRUNE - OBJECTIVE

- Reduce the risk of damage, provide clearance, reduce shade; improve air flow, light infiltration; promote flowers and fruit; improve vistas; improve aesthetics

TOOLS AND SAFETY

- Pruners & Loppers: Bypass vs. Anvil-style
- Handsaws: Push vs. Pull (Cuts >1/2")
- Extensions / Ladders
- PPE
- Cleaning / Pathogen awareness

BIG PICTURE

New England Forest vs. Built Landscape = Basically *Shade vs. Sun*

- Canopy trees = "Shade trees"
- Understory trees = "Ornamentals"
- Understory shrubs = Specimens, Borders, Hedges, etc.
- *Pioneers = Short-lived, Fast Growers, (Invasives....)*

In Landscape, woody plants can "forget" their form:

- Shade trees develop "co-dominant" stems with weak unions = poor architecture
- Ornamentals/Shrubs develop excess growth, crossing/rubbing, unsustainable form.

WHEN to PRUNE?

- Flowers vs. Efficiency?
- Plant Health

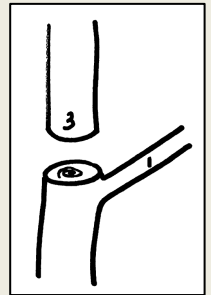
TREES: 3 TYPES OF PRUNING CUTS

- Reduction or Drop-crotch – shorten length
- Removal or Thinning
- Topping or Heading

THE 3 CUT METHOD

- Safe, Clean, Thoughtful
- First or "undercut" determines direction of fall and minimizes "peel".
- Second cut removes bulk of branch or leader
- Third or "finish" cut removes remaining stub
- *If removing deadwood, 3rd cut should be made just outside living tissue of branch collar*

The 1/3 Rule



Going for Us not Vs

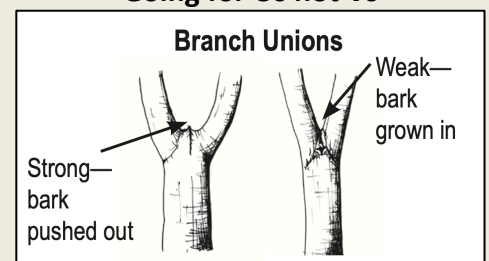


Image: treesaregood.org

Three Step Method

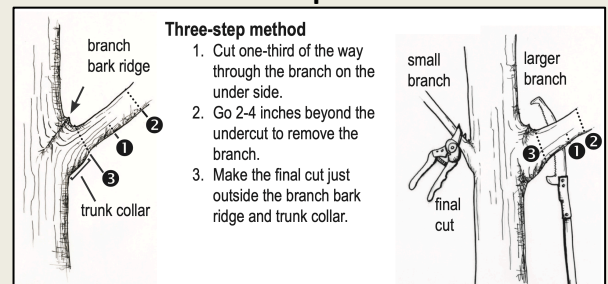
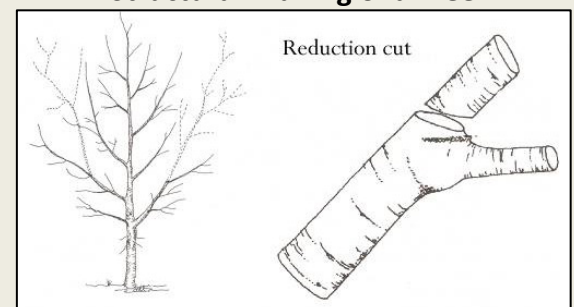


Image: fs.usda.gov

Structural Pruning of a Tree



Ed Gilman, Univ Fla

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SHRUBS, OVERALL GOALS OF:

- Reduction/Maintenance “Heading Back”
- Thinning/Renovation “Renewal”
- Rejuvenation/Basal or Shearing

BACKYARD TIPS - Some “Zingers” to remember

- Do No Harm
- Fewer, Bigger Cuts
- Out with the Old, in with the New
- 1/3 Rule on Young Trees
- When Will You be Back?
- Always be Renovating
- Watch your Brush Pile
- HAVE FUN!

Comments and Questions, please!

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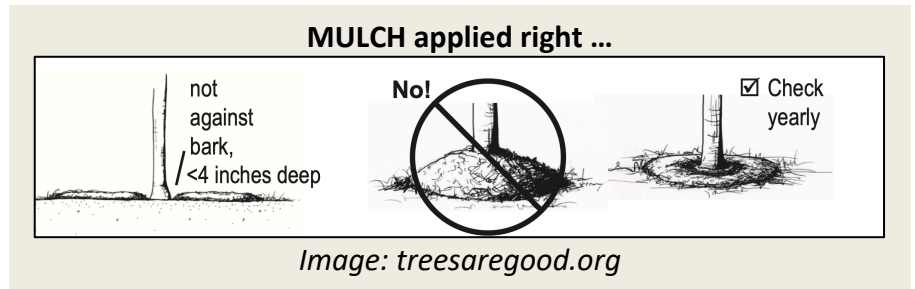
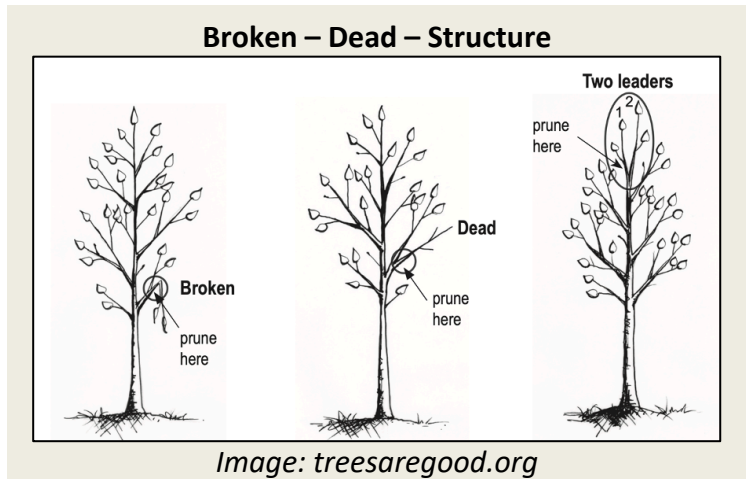
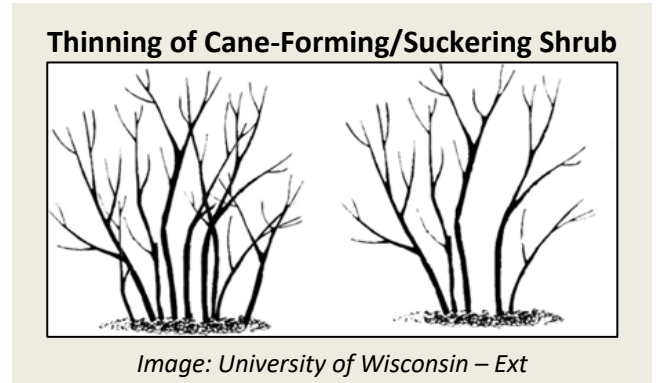
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NOTES
