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PRUNING TREES

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PRUNING TREES

WHY PRUNE?

Trees are pruned to obtain a certain definite shape; to remove dead, injured or diseased branches; and to limit their size.

PRUNING EVERGREENS

For pruning, evergreens fall into three groups, which are based on the time the pruning should be done and the method of doing the pruning.

GROUP I - JUNIPERS, CEDARS AND ARBORVITAE

These may be cut at any time, preferably from April to mid-August. You can trim anywhere as long as you do not cut beyond the living foliage portion of the branches. It is best to confine your work to the younger wood. Use hedge shears on compact, "definitely formed" trees. Hand shears or a knife can be used on other forms such as low growing; globe, or prostrate types.

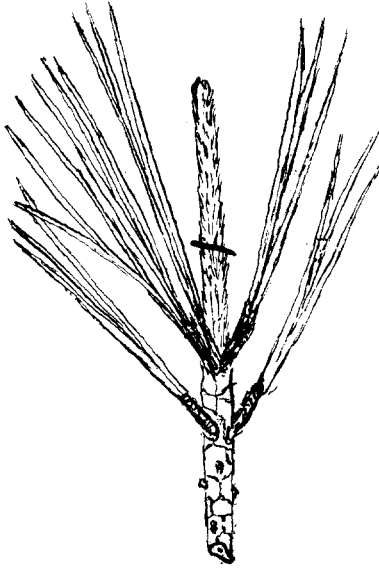


Before Pruning



After Pruning

GROUP II - PINES

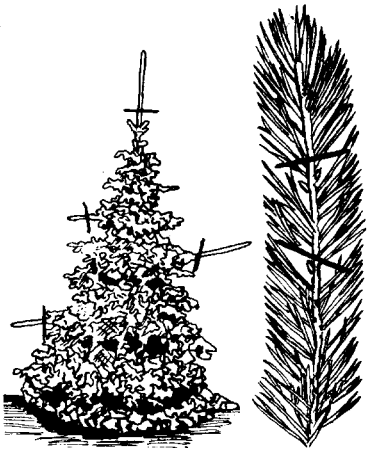


The pines, except in occasional cases where older wood must be taken out, are pruned only in late spring when the buds have made most of their elongation and the needles are beginning to grow in length. The diagram on the left shows at what stage of growth you can do your pruning.

Pruning back of the pine bud can be done by cutting with pruners, or simply by breaking off the bud end with the fingers.

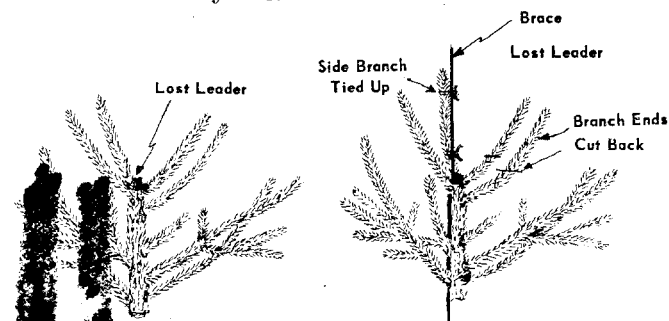
GROUP III - SPRUCES

Spruce, a large, tall growing tree, is often planted in confined spaces. To keep it in bounds, pruning every year or at 2-year intervals is needed. The preferred method of pruning consists of cutting back on 1 year old shoots (last year's branches) making the cut to one of the lateral (side) buds. If older wood is to be removed, cut back to another shoot or branch.



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The best time for pruning is just before new growth begins in the spring. However, light pruning can be done in summer or early fall.



Spice also can be pruned the same as pine--that is, by cutting or breaking off part of the new succulent growth.

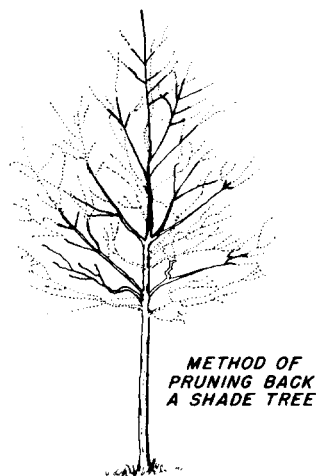
If leaders are broken or fail to develop, bend the nearest shoot into the position the leader should occupy. Tie in place to a brace. After a month or two the brace may be removed. It may be necessary to cut back all the other branches in the whorl.

A FEW GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON EVERGREEN PRUNING

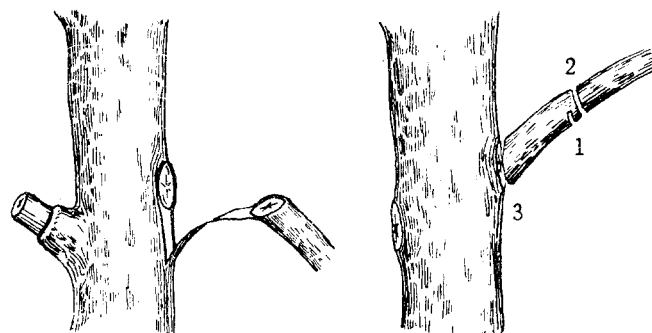
Be careful in evergreen pruning to: (1) Leave the lower limbs on the tree as long as they are alive and healthy. Evergreens look best when they are green from the ground to the top. (2) Avoid severe pruning in late summer or fall, as removal of outside limbs exposes inner branches which are not accustomed to exposure and are, therefore, more subject to winter sun damage. (3) Avoid pruning below live foliage, as evergreens do not readily put out new growth from old wood. (4) Prune your trees often, preferably once a year. Junipers can be pruned twice a year.

HARDWOODS

It usually is best to prune shade trees during early spring before they are in full leaf. At this time wounds will begin to heal immediately with less chance of insect or fungus damage. However, pruning established birch and maple, including box-elder, should be delayed until trees are in full leaf. These varieties bleed profusely if pruned in early spring. Newly planted birch and maple as well as all other species should be pruned at planting time to compensate for root loss.



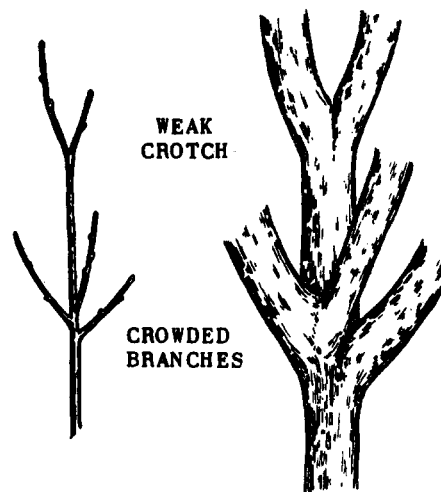
Branches under 1 inch in diameter can be removed flush with the main branch or tree trunk, with one saw cut or with pruning shears. Removing larger limbs should be done in three separate cuts:



WRONG WAY

RIGHT WAY

1. Make a cut on the under side of the branch about 1 foot out from where the branch joins the trunk. This cut should be at least one-fourth of the way through the branch.
2. A second cut is made on the top side of the branch and 1 or 2 inches farther out than the first cut. This cut should be continued through the branch.
3. The third cut is then made flush with the tree trunk, cutting off the remaining stub.



Eliminate weak crotches or crowded branches.

All cuts of 2 inches or more in diameter should be painted with a tree wound dressing. Orange shellac, roofing compound, asphalt and crude lanolin are excellent dressings.

In general, trees other than evergreens are pruned by heading back the side branches. Avoid cutting back the leader whenever possible.

