

Shrub and trees—care, planting, and pruning



January-What to do—and what not to do this month

Prune deciduous landscape trees and shrubs (plants that lose their leaves and go dormant in winter). Here's a great guide of what plants you can prune and when: https://portlandnursery.com/docs/trees/Pruning_Calendar.pdf

WAIT to prune roses until after Forsythia bushes bloom—usually end of Feb.



January: What to do—and what not to do this month

Do NOT prune spring flowering shrubs now—you will have significantly fewer flowers this season if you do! Watch for our pruning guidelines in later issues of “Looking Ahead.”

WAIT to prune summer flowering shrubs until next month

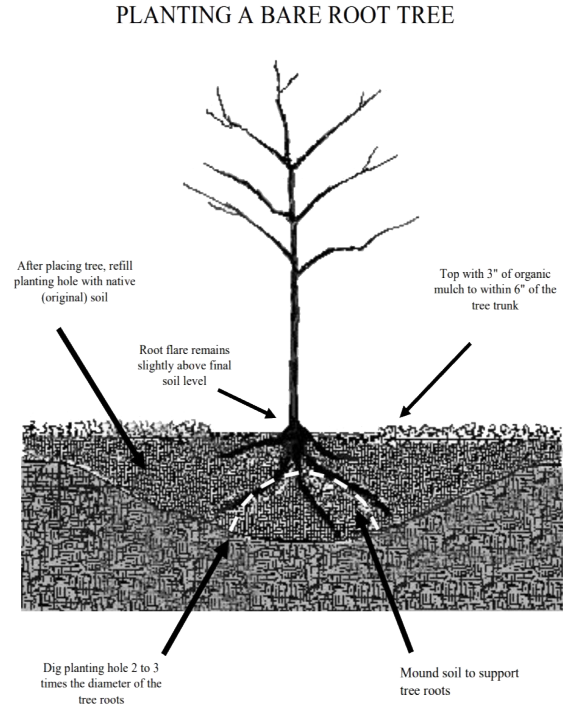
If the weather gets really cold, move potted plants into a sheltered area and protect roots from freezing.

January: What to do—and what not to do this month

Transplant small shrubs and trees during January and February. Great time to plant new bare-root fruit trees—Here's how:

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2017/06/C108-Planting-Bare-Root-Trees-15a.pdf> (See image to the right)

Protect the south facing trunks of young trees with white latex paint diluted with an equal amount of water. This will help to protect against bark splitting due to fluctuating extremes of temperature from daytime hot sun on trunk to freezing temps at night.



January/February: Basic Plant/tree care

Now is the time to look for *disease and pest resistant fruit tree varieties*. Check with local nurseries.

Get a [SOIL TEST](#) so you'll know what soil care your plants will need. It costs \$24, but it will save you a lot of money in the long run.

[Proper pruning](#) will help with better air circulation, better quality fruit, better pesticide coverage

SANITATION—this is a biggie! Remove and burn diseased branches and leaves. Remove and destroy all old fruit on the ground. Don't use diseased leaves as mulch

January/February: Basic Plant/tree care

Pest monitoring is crucial!! Learn the pests that will likely attack your trees, and when you should expect them. Get out there and inspect your trees. Stay tuned to our “Looking Ahead” for upcoming problems to watch for.

Use the ***least toxic choices*** for pesticides. Insecticidal soaps and oils are effective against a lot of fruit tree pests. BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) is another organic option that controls many caterpillars.

Something frequently ***overlooked***—***using as few pesticides as possible***, or spot treating, protects beneficial insects that keep the pests at bay!

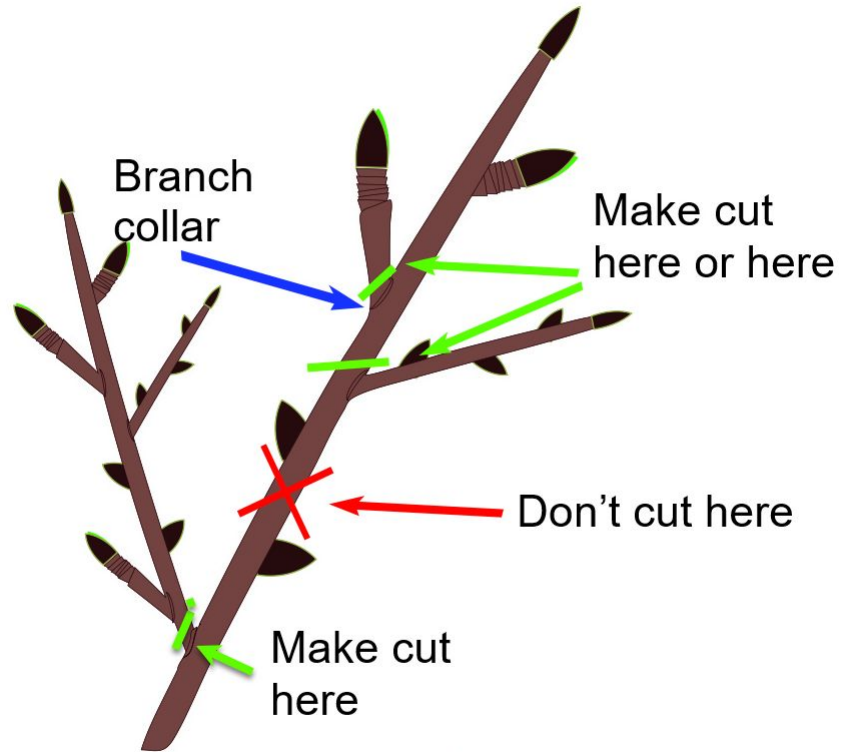
Basic Pruning cuts

There are more comprehensive instructions for pruning in this article—including how-to videos:

<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/pruning-shrubs-and-hedges>

Here are the basic cuts you can make. Pruning correctly makes for a healthier plant!

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2109/2015/01/EB0937-PruningWeb1.pdf>



Shrubs to prune January/February

Maple (Acer)	Trumpet (Campsis)	Cotoneaster
Kiwi (Actinidia)	Hornbeam (Carpinus-)	Euonymus
Serviceberry (Amelanchier)	Bittersweet (Celastrus)	Malus-Crabapple
Barberry (Berberis)	Wintersweet (Chimonanthus)	Elderberry (Sambucus)
Birch (Betula)-	Dogwood (Cornus-)	Stauntonia
Katsura	Filbert (Corylus)	Wisteria
Crape myrtle	Smoke Tree	Vitex
Rose of Sharon	Hardy fuchsia (Fuchsia magellanica)	Winterberry (Ilex verticillata)
Hardy Fuchsia (Fuchsia magellanica)	Cape fuchsia (Phygelius)	Russian sage (Perovskia)
Bluebeard (Caryopteris).		

Shrubs to prune January-February

The following shrubs should be pruned very lightly or they won't bloom

Rhododendron

Azalea

Rockrose (Cistus)

California lilac (Ceonothus)

The following only need to have their old flowers cut back

Pieris

Rosemary

Daphne odora and other
winter daphnes

Pruning—January-February—While dormant—no new growth

Apples and pears—Here's how: [Pruning Apple and Pear Trees video](#) and an excellent, simple guide

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2109/2015/01/EB0937-PruningWeb1.pdf>

Plums—Here's how: [How to Prune Plums video](#)

Cherry—Wait until August to prune to help avoid bacterial infection.

Sweet Cherries don't do well in western WA (rain cracking, fungal rots, bacterial canker).

See [EB 0937 Fruit Handbook for Western Washington: Varieties & Culture](#)

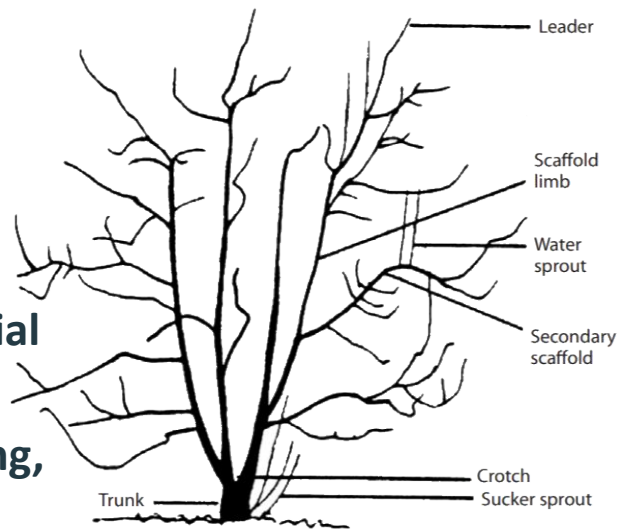


Figure 1. Common terms used in pruning and training fruit trees.

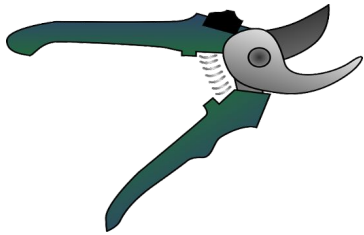
Pruning—January-February—While dormant—no new growth

Peach—Here's how: [How to Prune a Mature Peach Tree](#) (includes link to pruning younger peach trees)

Raspberries (summer bearing- most common)—while plants are dormant, remove all weak, broken, diseased, and insect-damaged canes, leaving healthy primocanes on the hill How to: [Video](#)

[Grapes](#)—not yet—late Feb/early March

Blueberries—Prune after 3rd year after planting. Here's how: [Pruning Blueberries video](#)



How about evergreens?

Conifer evergreens require very little pruning.

However dead, diseased, or damaged branches can be removed any time.

Rule of thumb: never remove more than one-third of a plant at any time. Removing too much growth all at once is very stressful to a plant and it will take them a long time to recover.

Spruces, firs and Douglas firs can be pruned now, before new growth begins.

DO NOT prune pines, arborvitae, junipers, yews or hemlocks now.

Why aren't my shrubs blooming?

- ***Age of the shrub**—it may take a few years before a young shrub will be mature enough to bloom
- ***Environmental stress**—too much or not enough water, not enough light, winter kill of flower buds, and late frost damage to young blossoms.
- ***Too much nitrogen fertilizer**—this results in lush, green growth but no flowers
- ***Pruning**—spring flowering shrubs should be pruned by the end of June at the latest. If you prune them later, you will be cutting off next year's flower buds. Removing more than 1/3 of the bush when pruning is excessive and may cause no flower buds to be formed because it stimulates leaf growth
- ***Improper pesticide** (Insecticide, herbicide, or fungicide) can damage or kill flower buds. **READ THE LABELS!!**
- *The **number one reason why plants of all kinds fail**, including trees and shrubs, is **not planting the right plant in the right place**. Research your plant before you buy it. Look at its growing requirements—sunlight, soil, watering, drought resistance, hardiness zone.



Check out your azaleas

Do your azalea or Rhododendron leaves look like this? If so, it's from damage caused by the Azalea Lace Bug last year.

You will have a problem this year—the eggs overwinter along the mid-rib on the underside of the leaf—go out and look for the now.

They hatch mid-April to mid-May—This is the time to attach them in their immature stage

First step is to wash them off with a very strong spray of water.

For complete information on how to manage Azalea Lace Bugs, see WSU Hortsense:

<http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/Search/MainMenuWithFactSheet.aspx?CategoryId=1&SubCatId=4&PlantDefId=3&ProblemId=782>



Rhododendron lace bug
Stephanitis rhododendri Horvath
Egg(s) on host

Prune spring-flowering shrubs AFTER they bloom

Not all shrubs will need pruning, but if you're going to prune, to it by the end of June at the latest!

Akebia	Azalea	Weigela	Choisya--Mexican Orange	Daphne	Deutzia
Elaeagnus--Russian Olive	Silverberry	Escallonia	Euphorbia--Spurge	Forsythia	Helianthemum--Sunrose
Hibiscus	Hydrangea	Jasminum--Jasmine	Kerria	Kolkwitzia Beauty bush	Lonicera japonica--Honeysuckle
Magnolia	Mahonia--Oregon Grape	Passiflora--Passionflower	Philadelphus--Mock Orange	Pieris	Rhododendron
Ribes--Currant	Rosemary	Schizophragma--Climbing Hydrangea	Syringa--Lilac	Viburnum--has specific pruning requirements	Wisteria

Shrubs

Camellia watch for [Cottony Camellia Scale](#)

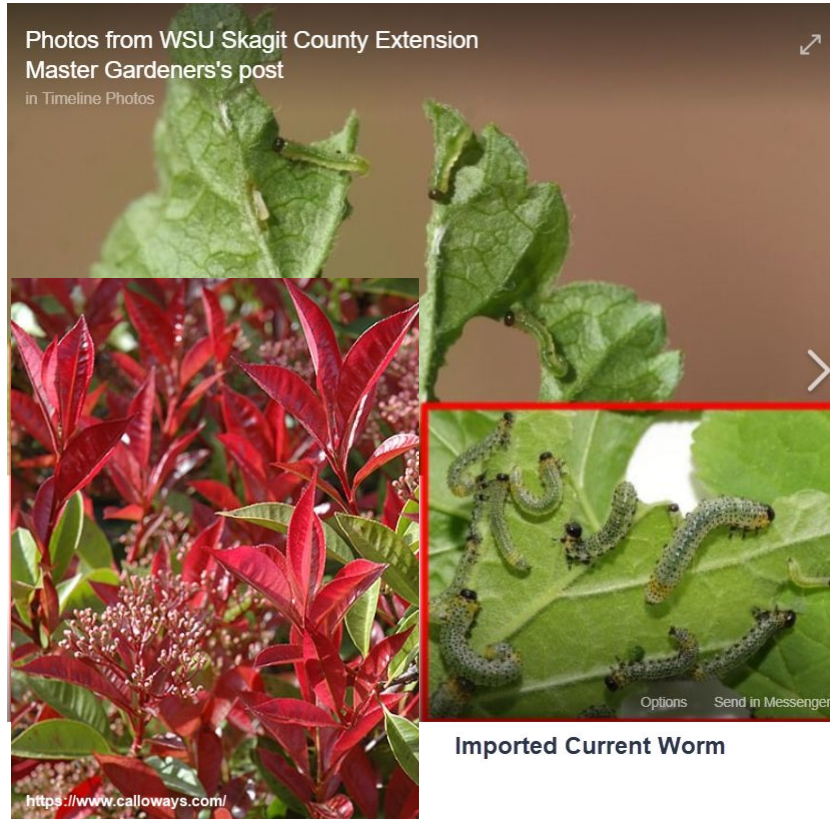
Photinia—trim back mid-May to refresh red foliage

Currant: Watch for [Imported Currant Worms](#)



"Cottony camellia" scale
Pulvinaria floccifera Westwood

© [Ken Gray Insect Image Collection](#)



Photinia

Imported Current Worm

Shrubs: Azaleas & Rhododendrons

Culture and Care:

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/fs12/html>

Fertilize, if soil test indicates need, just after flowering with fertilizer formulated for acid-loving plants

Mulch to control weeds and conserve moisture.

Prune off diseased and dead branches.

Dead head (remove) spent flowers after blooming



Spent flower removal. Photo by Steve Henning

Shrubs: Azaleas & Rhododendrons

Marginal Leaf Necrosis

Physiological Leaf Spot

Sunscald



*Caption: Rhododendron physiological leaf spot
Photo by: R.S. Byther*



*Caption: Rhododendron marginal leaf necrosis
Photo by: R.S. Byther*



*Caption: Sunburn on rhododendron
Photo by: R.S. Byther*



*Caption: Sunburn on rhododendron
Photo by: R.S. Byther*

<https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/identifying-treating-and-avoiding-azalea-and-rhododendron-problems-replaces-eb1229-physical>

Shrubs and trees

Roses ([calendar for care](#))- WSU's *Growing Roses in Washington State* series

[Planting](#)

[Seasonal Calendar](#)

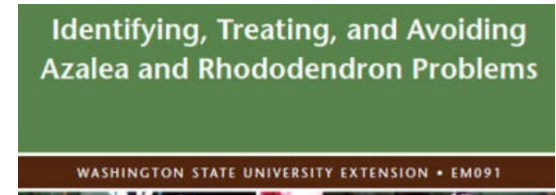
[Common Diseases and Insect Problems](#)

Azaleas and Rhododendrons—This publication will walk you step-by-step through finding and treating your problems!

[Identifying, Treating, and Avoiding Azalea and Rhododendron Problems](#)

Wisteria—prune after blooming, and check them to train them to your trellis structure. Prune off wandering shoots.

[http://marinmg.ucanr.edu/Our_Projects/Leaflet/Proper pruning of wisteria produces a plethora of blossoms/](http://marinmg.ucanr.edu/Our_Projects/Leaflet/Proper_pruning_of_wisteria_produces_a_plethora_of_blossoms/)



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ADD TO CART



June: Shrubs and trees

Birch trees are aphid magnets. If you find a sticky substance on structures, cars, and plants beneath a birch, call for help.

Pruning Pines-We've passed the pruning window for most conifers. However, you can prune PINE CANDLES (new growth) to control the size of the tree. Wait until the candles are 2-4 in. long, then pinch off $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the candle.

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/pruning-evergreens/> and <https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/618.pdf>

Irrigate young trees! They need 3-5 gallons of water a week during the summer. You may need to water more during hot, dry weather.

<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/watering-trees-and-shrubs>



<https://valeaston.typepad.com/a/6a011168642488970c01156fa8cda9970c-pi>

Great Sites:

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2015/07/C109-Keys-to-Good-Pruning-14.pdf>

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/crop-production/fruit-trees/tree-pruning-basics>

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2015/07/C109-Keys-to-Good-Pruning-14.pdf>

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2076/2017/07/C111-Pruning-Evergreens-15.pdf>

<https://research.libraries.wsu.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2376/4990/FS131E.pdf?..>

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Book:

Pruning & Training, The American Horticultural Society, Christopher Brickell & David Joyce.

Shrubs and trees-summer irrigation

Irrigate young trees! They need 3-5 gallons of water a week during the summer. You may need to water more during hot, dry weather.

<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/watering-trees-and-shrubs>

We are seeing cumulative damage on many trees and shrubs because of inadequate summer irrigation. This leaves them vulnerable to pests and diseases.

If we go for a month without rain, large landscape trees will appreciate a deep watering, too. Water slowly, deeply, and thoroughly. Use 5 gallon buckets with a few holes drilled in the bottom and place under the dripline of the tree.

Grass competes with trees for water—use mulch instead to help with water evaporation.

For more details, see: HOW TO GET TREES, SHRUBS, AND TURF THROUGH A DROUGHT

<https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/publications/fulltext/Roadside/WiseWaterUse.pdf>



<https://www.familyhandyman.com/article/better-tree-watering/>

Tree watering tips

Excerpt from OSU: <https://www.oregonlive.com/hg/2020/02/ask-an-expert-6-tips-for-keeping-trees-well-watered-in-any-season.html>

General Watering Tips

Slower is better. Trees can best soak up water when it is distributed slowly to a depth of 12 inches. Slow watering allows for best absorption. Irrigation lines are ideal for this style of watering. A good rule of thumb for each watering session is to slowly distribute 5 to 10 gallons of water for every inch in the tree's diameter.

Avoid soaking right around the tree's trunk. Doing so can increase the chance of disease, fungal infestation in particular. Instead, focus on watering the area underneath and beyond the tree's canopy. (Young trees are an exception to this rule; their roots will only occupy the planting hole area right around the trunk.)

Be generous with damaged roots. Root systems that have been damaged will require more water for repair.

Mulch for protection. Lay down mulch to a depth of 3 or 4 inches beneath the drip line. This will conserve moisture and offer some protection against cold. Leave the space right around the trunk free of mulch,

.

Tree watering tips

Avoid extended soil saturation. Too much water can smother developing roots. If the underlying soil is soggy, hold off on watering. You can use a soil probe to determine soil moisture levels. A ¼- to 3/8-inch diameter rod will slide easily through moist soil, and become difficult to push into dry soil. You are looking for moisture at a depth of 6 inches below the soil surface.

Water near the soil, not on foliage. Avoid spraying leaves with water. This can deposit salt and damage foliage. Overhead irrigation creates a disease-happy environment, where leaf spot diseases, mildew, fungus, and bacteria can take hold. Soaker hoses, standard hoses, and irrigation systems are the best water delivery systems.

Summer watering: Trees' irrigation needs are at a zenith in the mid- to late summer when winter moisture has been exhausted from the soil. Deep watering will satisfy a tree's summer needs for 10 days to four weeks, depending on the species and the conditions. During the most extreme conditions, watering once per week or more may be required, depending on how the soil holds moisture

October: SHRUBS AND TREES - Winter Care

Sanitation is critical in reducing plant disease - clean up plant debris under all trees, shrubs, and perennials. Prune off dead, damaged, or diseased branches. Disinfect pruners with Lysol or alcohol between cuts. Mulch around plants, but keep about 6 - 8 inches from the base/trunk of the plant. Protect the trunks of young trees from winter sun injury. Either 1.) wrap the trunk with white tree wrap or 2.) paint the trunk with a 50/50 mixture of water and white interior latex paint to about 4 ft. high. This will reflect the sun's heat from the vulnerable trunk and help prevent splits.



<https://extension.umn.edu/planting-and-growing-guides/protecting-trees-and-shrubs-winter#sunscald-1263860>

OCTOBER: PLANT NEW SHRUBS AND TREES

Best time to plant! Soil is warm, watering is not a problem, and roots will have months to establish.

Nurseries are having sales right now!

Choose the [right plant for the right place!](#)

[Plant correctly](#)—don't put a \$100 plant in a \$10 hole! Hole should be 2 - 4 times wider than the root ball and slightly shallower.

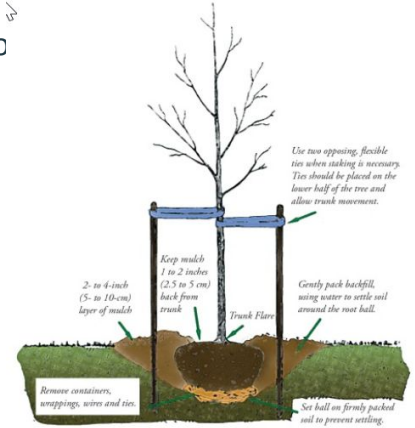
Do **NOT** use soil amendments in the planting hole. The only thing that should be backfilled with the plant is the original soil and water.

To help you choose:

WSU—Gardening with Trees and Shrubs
<http://gardening.wsu.edu/trees-and-shrubs/>

OSU—Landscape Plants :
<https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/native-and-naturalized-woody-plants-oregon>

Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden—Great Plant Picks
<https://www.greatplantpicks.org/plantlists/search>



<https://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/plantingatree>

Table
of
Contents