

PRUNING YOUNG TREES

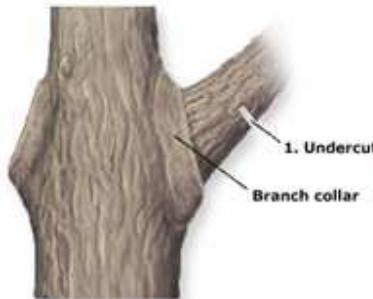
It is imperative to note that each cut one makes has the potential to change the future look of your tree, so stop and think first before you pick up that saw, unless you are an expert pruner. Trees don't heal as humans do, so each cut is critical. Research pruning cuts before you start.

Proper technique is essential. Be sure to check where and how to make cuts before you do any cutting. Small cuts do less damage than large cuts, so proper pruning of a young tree can help you to avoid big pruning later when the tree is mature.

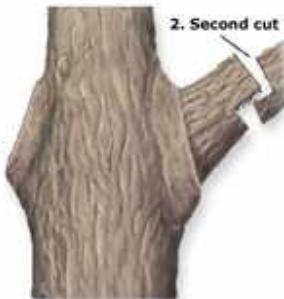
Be sure to make all pruning cuts outside the branch collar. The branch collar contains the tissues of the trunk or parent branch, and so you want to avoid damaging this area.

Pruning a Large Limb

1 Undercut 12-24" up from the branch collar. This stops the bark from tearing.



2 Make the second cut from the top all the way through the branch, 2-3" above cut #1.



FAMILY B's TREE — Pruned When Young



3 The final cut should be just beyond the branch collar. Support the stub so it does not tear the bark.

3. Final cut

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A good rule is that if a permanent branch needs to be shortened, cut it back to a lateral branch or bud.

Tools Are Important

Most small trees can be pruned with hand shears. It's preferable to use by-pass or scissor type hand pruners, rather than the anvil type. (See below under resources for pictures.) Make sure your tools are sharp and clean, and never prune a tree with hedge shears.

Young trees do not need to be pruned when planted, unless you need to remove broken or damaged branches. It's best to let them establish the first year,, and do any necessary pruning for the second or third year. Most professional arborists now agree that wound dressings do not need to be used, although this was thought desirable in the past.

Also refer to our information on “Pruning mature Trees”

Here are a few useful sites for pruning techniques:

www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht_prune/prun001.htm

aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_h/h-156.pdf

www.tlcfortrees.info/pruning_young_trees.htm

www.treesaregood.com

Information on Pruning Shears

www.douggreensgarden.com/pruning-shears.html