

Pruning Fruit Trees: Clip with Confidence!

REASONS TO PRUNE

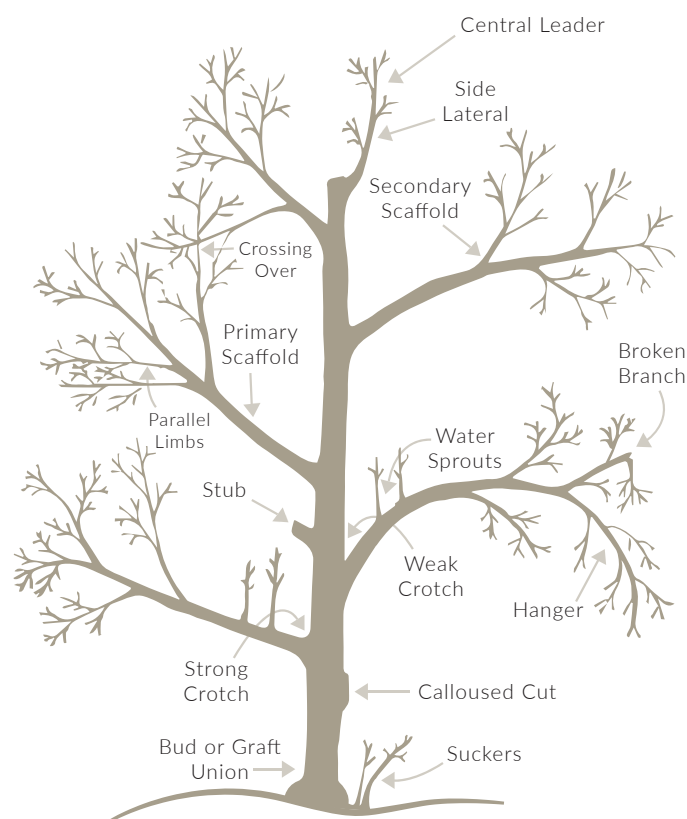
- Maximize sun and air exposure to fruiting wood
- Improve fruit size and quality of fruit
- Maintain vigorous, healthy trees
- Manage tree size and shape for ease of harvesting and spraying
- Maintain fruiting spurs or grow new wood for next year's fruit

WHEN AND HOW TO PRUNE

- New trees—the day they are planted
- Established trees—every year while the tree is dormant (late winter/early spring)
- Remove branches that are dead, diseased, damaged, hanging, rubbing; water sprouts, and suckers—as soon as noticed at any time of year
- Remember pruning stimulates a tree to break dormancy and start growing in the spring

HOW TO PRUNE AND WHERE TO CUT

- Cuts are made outside of the branch collar (swollen area where limb meets the tree)
- Heading cuts—shortening a branch/shoot to encourage lateral growth
- Thinning cuts—removing entire branch/shoot back to a lateral branch to control direction of growth



Cut too high
from bud



Cut at
wrong angle



Cut too
close to bud



Angle too
steep



Rough
cut



Correct
cut

PEACH, NECTARINE, APRICOT, JAPANESE PLUM, SOUR CHERRY

1 Open Vase

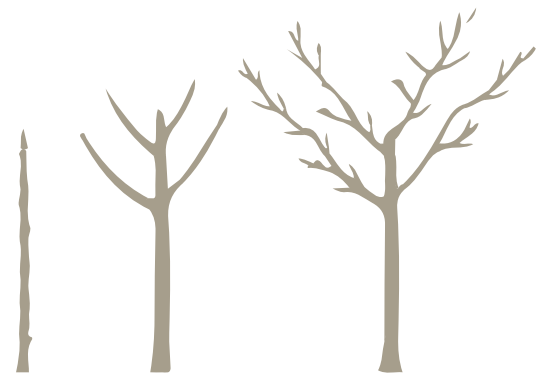
- Remove central leader
- Select three to four primary scaffold branches to leave for growth
- Branches should start about 18-24" up from the ground
- All scaffold branch angles should be angled 45-60 degrees from trunk

2 Know Where the Fruit is Found:

- Buds form on 1-year-old wood (branches produced the previous year)
- Peaches and nectarines usually have a triple bud arrangement of two fruiting buds on the outside and one leaf bud in the center

3 Prune off about 60 to 80 % of last year's growth

- This will stimulate new growth for next year's fruit production
- Let the light and air in to improve fruit color and provide good air circulation around fruit
- Choose pencil sized diameter 1-year-old wood to leave on the tree for fruit production and shorten these to 6-8" long.



APPLE, PEARS

1 Central Leader/Modified Central Leader:

- Select three to four lower primary scaffold branches about 20-30" up from the ground
- Select three to four upper secondary scaffold branches that are 18-20" above the first set of scaffolds
- Try to place the secondary scaffold branches at right angles to the primary scaffolds
- All scaffold branch angles should be angled 45-60 degrees from trunk

2 Know Where the Fruit is Found:

- On spurs that are 2 years and older—do not prune off fruiting spurs

3 Prune to let the light and air in to improve fruit color and provide good air circulation around fruit



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Pruning the Orchard: tinyurl.com/pruningtools
- How to Prune Apple Trees: tinyurl.com/peachtreepruning
- How to Prune Peach Trees: tinyurl.com/pruningappletrees
- How to Select Pruning Tools: tinyurl.com/pruningtheorchard