

**PRUNING IS ONE OF THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE INVESTMENTS YOU CAN MAKE IN THE PROACTIVE CARE OF YOUR LANDSCAPE'S TREES AND SHRUBS.**

A yearly pruning program helps to maintain the health, beauty and safety of plantings.

Periodic examination by a Bartlett Arborist Representative is recommended to identify, prevent and correct structural defects, improve appearance and assure safe, healthy trees and shrubs. Storm damage remediation may also be required to restore plantings.

A professional arborist should make the pruning decisions—improper pruning can be harmful to plant health and actually inhibit healthy growth. No pruning cut should ever be made without a specific reason—so choose your arborist carefully and rely on experts who know how to make these decisions.



1-877-BARTLETT  
(877-227-8538)  
[www.bartlett.com](http://www.bartlett.com)

UNITED STATES | CANADA | GREAT BRITAIN | IRELAND



# Pruning: Maintenance is an Art





## WHY IS PERIODIC PRUNING NECESSARY?

Safety is a primary reason for regular pruning. Weak branches and branches that interfere with structures, lighting, utility lines, pedestrians or vehicle traffic need to be removed. Pruning also directs and invigorates plant growth. By removing any dead, dying, diseased and crossing branches, vital energy reserves are redirected to the remaining branches. Periodic pruning helps to maintain a desirable and attractive natural shape while enhancing the beauty and health of your landscape.

## WHEN SHOULD PRUNING BEGIN?

Training young plants with pruning provides a strong structure to support future growth. Most young trees need to develop a strong central leader and be balanced so that weight stress is distributed properly. This prevents structural problems later in the life of the plant.

## IS IT EVER TOO LATE TO PRUNE?

You should begin pruning plants when they are young and growing rapidly to ensure a desirable form and structure. Be careful with selection of branches to allow the natural growth habit of the tree or shrub to develop. Safety is always a primary concern. Trees with dead branches and/or weakened limbs need immediate pruning.

## CAN OVERGROWN ORNAMENTALS BE CORRECTED BY PRUNING?

Neglected ornamentals may take 3-5 years to renovate. This is especially true of crab apple and pear trees. Drastic pruning can result in weak growth. It's recommended to prune ornamentals when they are young to remove undesirable growth and maintain their beautiful shapes.

# 1-877-BARTLETT

## ARE THERE DIFFERENT PRUNING TECHNIQUES FOR CONIFERS?

Yes, and the techniques are different for each species. Pruning must begin on a young plant. Selective pruning by an arborist can increase crown density, avoid dieback and encourage compact growth to maintain an attractive shape.

## CAN CROWN HEIGHT BE REDUCED?

Crown reduction may be necessary to reduce the height and overall size of the crown, to remove individual limbs or to shape the crown to avoid breakage and reduce weight. Crown reduction should never be confused with "topping" a tree. Topping (removing the entire crown) is unsightly, produces fast growing water sprouts in the short term and will ultimately weaken and kill a tree. No reputable arborist will top a tree, not even if the client specifically requests it.

## WHAT IS SPECIALTY PRUNING?

Specialty pruning is performed to obtain objectives other than maintaining the natural form of the plant. Vista pruning is performed to either reduce or raise a tree crown or to thin out branches to open up a specific view. Other specialty pruning techniques include espalier—the cutting and training of branches on a wall, fence or trellis—and pollarding, which is the process of removing annual shoots back to a knot or "head." Pollarding was in vogue during the renaissance on large estates because it presents a very formal appearance.



## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SHEARING AND PRUNING?

Shearing is used to remove a portion of current year's growth and is performed once or twice a year. It gives a formal, structural look. Shearing concentrates on the foliage along the perimeter of the plant. If damage



Lorapetalum before pruning



Lorapetalum after pruning

occurs, ugly holes could appear in the inner portion of the plant due to lack of foliar growth. Shearing promotes an artificial shape to the plant. Pruning provides a natural shape and usually results in a healthier plant. The process removes growth from prior to the current season and rejuvenates the plant.

## CONTACT YOUR LOCAL BARTLETT ARBORIST REPRESENTATIVE

Bartlett helped to establish industry-wide pruning standards with ANSI (American National Standards Institute). Our Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories maintains stringent pruning guidelines in addition to ANSI to ensure that our clients receive the most effective pruning techniques that are available in the industry today. Ask for a consultation about pruning concerns on your landscape. Preventive maintenance is the key to proactive plant health care. You will be advised about the latest techniques in arboriculture and about what may (or may not) be necessary to improve your landscape through selective pruning.



Japanese Maple before pruning



Japanese Maple after pruning