



Tips for Tree Pruning

Conifers

- Conifers (e.g., pines, firs and cypresses) may be pruned any time of year.
- Pruning during the dormant season may minimize sap and resin flow from cut branches.
- Dead branches can be removed any time of the year.

Hardwood trees and shrubs

- Without flowers prune in the dormant season to easily visualize the structure of the tree, usually, the best time is during the late fall and winter.
- Pruning in the dormant season will maximize wound closure in the growing season after pruning, reduce the chance of disease, and discourage excessive sap flow from wounds.
- Prune these trees during the correct time of year to prevent spread of fatal diseases like Dutch elm fungus.
- Dead branches can be removed any time of the year.

Flowering trees and shrubs

- Trees and shrubs that flower in early spring (redbud, dogwood, etc.) can be pruned immediately after flowering.
- Trees and shrubs that flower in the summer or fall always should be pruned during the dormant season (flower buds will form on new twigs during the next growing season, and the flowers will flush normally).
- Dead branches can be removed any time of the year.

General pruning tips

- Prune first for safety, next for health, and finally for aesthetics.
- Never prune trees that are touching or near utility lines; consult your utility company.
- Avoid pruning trees when you might increase susceptibility to important pests (e.g., in areas where oak wilt exists, avoid pruning oaks in the spring and early summer; prune trees susceptible to fire-blight – rosebushes and apple and pear trees – only in the dormant season.)



When should a branch be removed?

- Under 5 cm diameter – go ahead
- Between 5 and 10 cm diameter – think twice
- Greater than 10 cm diameter – have a good reason (or call a professional!)

Want professional help?

Contact Danny Triplett at Westland Landscape, www.westlandkc.com. Danny is the featured expert on Home Sense videos. Get some more professional advice on landscaping and other home-related topics at www.huntmidwest.tv.