

Tips on Good Pruning

Prune early in the life of the tree so pruning wounds are small and the growth direction is where you want it.

First, begin with a visual look at the tree starting at the top and working downward. Before you begin pruning and removal of defective parts of a tree, pick out the best leader and lateral branches, also called scaffold limbs or branches to obtain a good shape or form of the tree. Don't worry about protecting the pruning wounds. For looks, you can paint larger wounds, but the evidence is that it does not prevent or reduce decay. Keep tools sharp! One-hand pruning shears with curved blades are the best. Some places refer to them as side cutters.

Safety should be number one priority. For high branches use a pole pruner. Some have a saw blade that is removable, and a shears on the same pole. For major jobs on a big tree, please hire a professional. Your life is worth more than a few hundred dollars.

When pruning on larger branches, you will notice what is called a collar, a swollen area at the base of the branch, bark ridge, you should cut just outside the branch ridge and collar at a slight downward and outward angle; not to injury the collar. On small limbs where the collar has not yet formed, the cut should be close to the trunk or limb. DO NOT leave stubs!

If shortening a small branch, make cuts at a lateral bud or branch, this is referred to as "head or head back pruning". Favor a bud so that it will become a branch so that it will grow in the direction you are desiring, usually outward. The cut should be clean and made at a slight angle about 1/4" just beyond the bud.

If you have any questions related to this article or other tree or shrub concerns, please contact the village office at 920-533-8321 and ask to speak to Diane Clark the Village of Campbellsport Forester.

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