



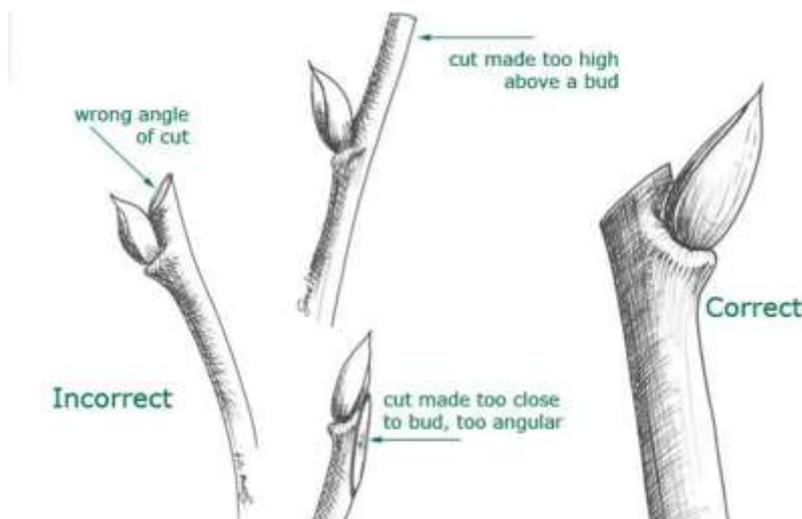
Top Tips For Winter Pruning

As the days get shorter and the temperatures fall you might feel like hibernating and many plants feel the same. They go into a period of 'dormancy' where they may shed their leaves and/or dramatically slow down their growth; this is the perfect time to prune many deciduous trees and shrubs that don't flower in early spring.

To get prepared you need to sort out your pruning tools and make sure they are sharp, clean and well oiled. Also make sure that you are using the right tool for the stems or branches you are cutting; secateurs should cut up to 1.5cm diameter, loppers up to 3cm diameter and beyond that use a pruning saw or bow saw. Remember that the right sized tool will cut the stem cleanly so that it heals quickly and does not become infected by bacteria or fungus. Also, well maintained tools mean less effort and strain for you.

Many gardeners are daunted by pruning techniques, but if you keep in mind a few key steps you should be able to tackle basic pruning in your garden.

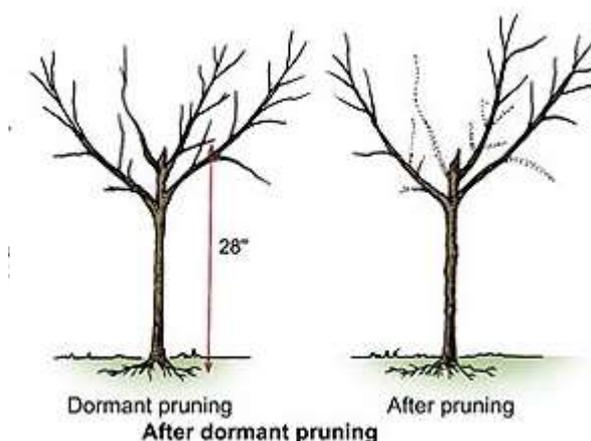
1. Always prune just above a bud or eye on the stem (where the leaf stalk joined the stem).
2. Make an angled 45° cut so the bud is at the highest point of your angle.



3. Choose an outward facing bud to cut above so new growth is encouraged to grow out from the centre of the tree/shrub.
4. Remove any dead, diseased or damaged stems.
5. Remove any stems that cross or rub against each other.
6. For overgrown shrubs remove about one third of the oldest stems down to the base.
7. DON'T prune if it's frosty or a frost is expected soon after you've pruned.

Trees and Shrubs for Winter Pruning

Apple and Pear trees – aim to create an open bowl-like structure to give space for sunlight and air to filter throughout the tree.



Blackcurrants – after removing dead, diseased and damaged stems remove one third of the stems (the oldest) down to the ground to encourage new growth.

Dogwood (Cornus) – leave until February so you can enjoy the colourful stems and then cut *all* stems down to within 2 inches (5 cm) of the ground

Willow (Salix), **Cotinus coggygria**, **Elder** (Sambucus), **Hazel** Corylus avellana) – if you are growing these for stem colour or leaf display, follow the same pruning as for Dogwood.

Avoid Pruning

Any trees or shrubs that flower in the early spring or flower on the previous year's growth such as Flowering Currants, Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Magnolia. These should be pruned soon after they have flowered in the summer or autumn.