

Pruning Fruit Trees

Why do we Prune Fruit Trees at all ?
There are several reason we prune fruit trees

- To get better quality Fruit
- To let light and air into the tree
- To train the tree to fit a certain space
- To restrict the size of a tree
- To control / minimize disease outbreaks

Should I prune in Summer or Winter?

In winter we prune for form, to create structure and encourage growth of new branches

In summer we prune to encourage formation of fruiting buds & let in light to ripen fruit.

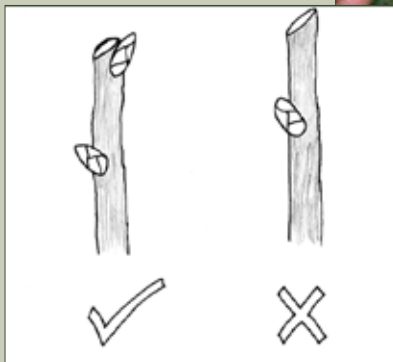
All trained forms are summer pruned.

Stone fruit such as Plums are summer pruned due to Silver leaf disease

A good guide is to winter prune young trees to encourage growth, then when they are as big as you want them to be, switch to summer pruning which encourages more fruit and less growth,



Make sure you can identify fruiting spurs



Make clean cuts at an angle close to the leaf bud - see diagram



Keep your tools clean and sharp



A well made cut should after a few years heal up completely



Key points to remember when pruning young fruit trees

Prune out:

- Diseased material.
- Branches that cross or rub each other.
- Favour branches that are going to achieve the shape you want.
- Thin out over-congested branches.



Principles of restorative pruning on old fruit trees

- Aim to reduce excessive weight in the crown.
- Remove badly diseased or damaged material.
- Remove crossing / rubbing branches
 - Aim to reinvigorate the tree.
 - Never remove more than 30% of a tree in any one pruning.

