Maintenance pruning

General maintenance pruning can be done any time of the year as long as the weather is not extremely hot, cold, or wet, however consideration needs to be made for flower blooms. In general, plants that bloom early in the spring, set flower buds during the previous summer, therefore should be pruned right after they bloom in the spring. Plants that bloom later in the summer, generally set buds the same year and can be pruned in early spring.
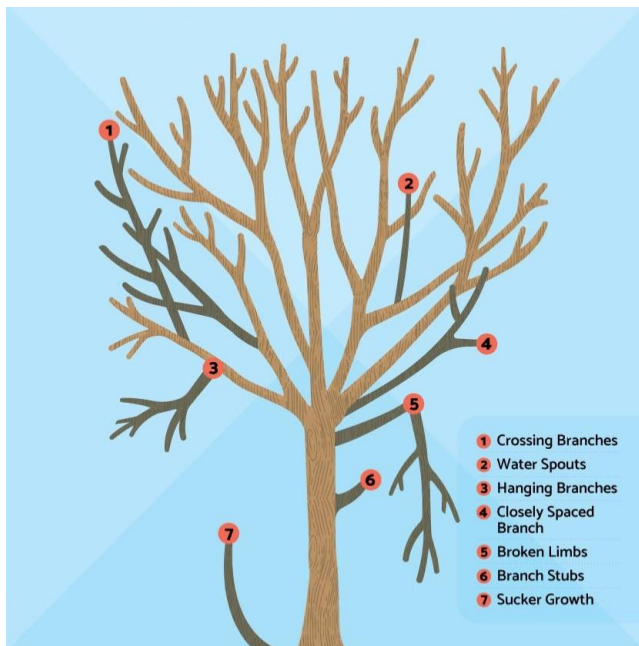
There are different types of pruning each with its own purpose.

Pruning landscape plants is different from pruning fruit trees. Pruning for maintenance is different from pruning for rejuvenation or reduction.

Fruit trees are pruned in the spring in part to promote new growth. Heavy pruning in the early spring can cause excessive vertical shoots called "Water Sprouts" that need to be thinned out or totally removed.

If the purpose of your pruning is to promote growth, prune in the early spring when the plant is dormant.

If the purpose is reducing the plant size or general maintenance, Pruning mid year pruning is less likely to promote excessive new growth.

1. Crossing Branches
2. Water Spouts
3. Hanging Branches
4. Closely Spaced Branch
5. Broken Limbs
6. Branch Stubs
7. Sucker Growth

A properly pruned tree not only looks better, it is also safer, and healthier. Pruning helps rejuvenate growth, impacts the direction in which a plant grows, and helps rid the plant of dead or diseased branches.

Many plants require little or no pruning.

When pruning is needed, begin with clean sharp tools. Evaluate the plant, and plan to remove 1/3 or less of the branches. First remove any branches that are damaged or unhealthy. (If pruning out diseased material, be sure to clean the tools before pruning another plant.)

Then, remove branches that rub together or head in the wrong direction. Encourage the shrub to branch outward by "Heading back" (Reduction cut) to branches that are budded to grow outward.
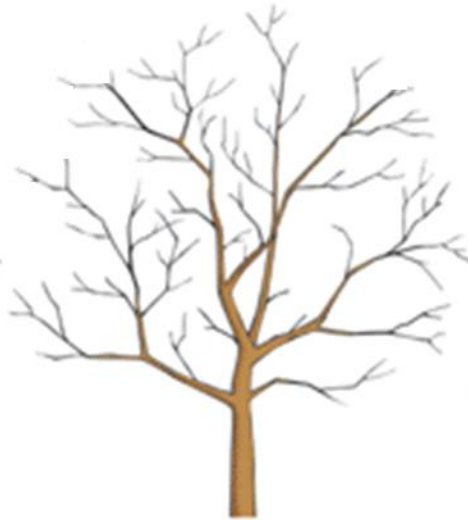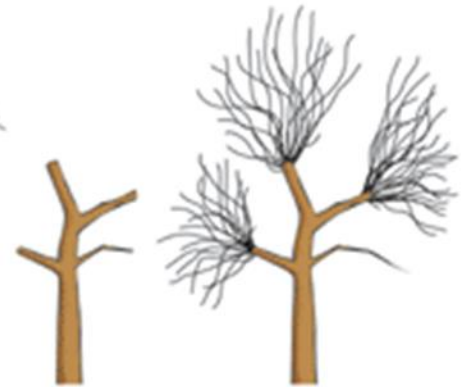
Look at Pruning

GOOD

NOT GOOD

Before Pruning

Well-Pruned, Open Head

Topping produces clumps of uncontrolled growth

Proper pruning can improve airflow and light availability. After removing unhealthy or problem branches, select branches to remove in order to maintain a balance of healthy branches of different ages that increase the area between branches. (Basically, making space between the main branches.) Thinning cuts can be made at any time of the year if the weather is not extremely hot, cold, or wet.

Like this

not this.