

PRUNING AFTER PLANTING

Technical information and practices when planting new trees



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Prune sparingly the first year after planting

Broken or dead branches are the main concern at this time.



At the nursery, the tree was managed for form and branch framework. After planting, allow the tree to grow one full season before doing extensive pruning.

A good quality tree needs minimal pruning

Pruning is done to correct defects or damages.



The above pictures illustrate the branch framework of good quality trees. Both have a straight dominant leader with small diameter side branches.

Tools for pruning

Tools should be clean, sharp and the right size for the job.



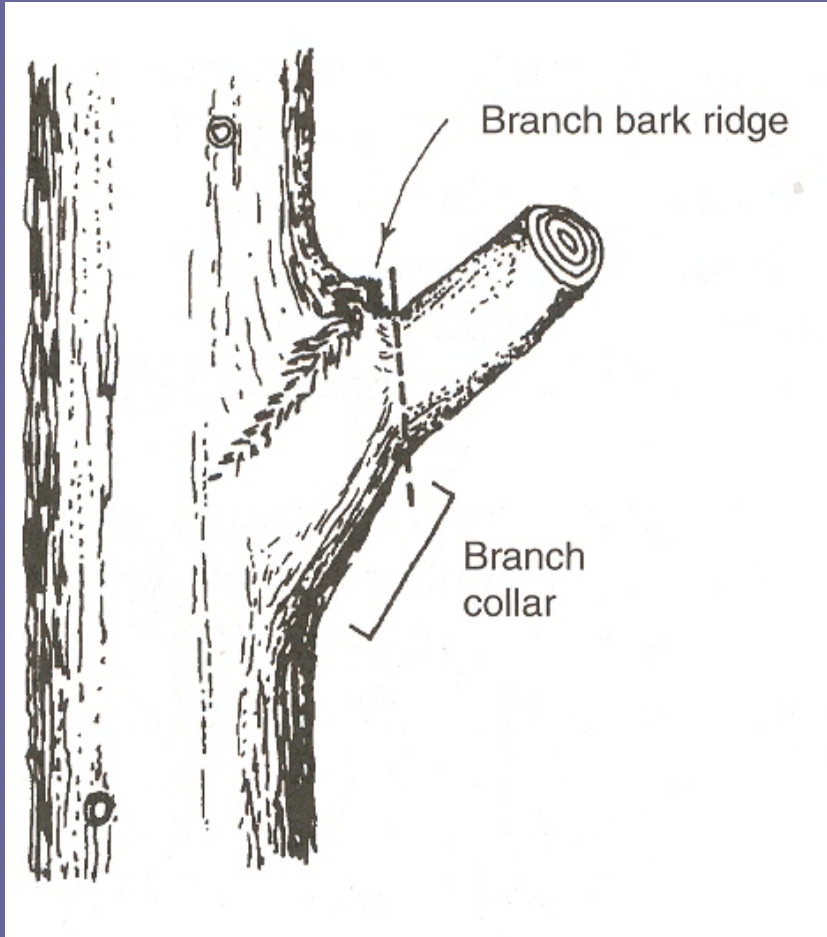
Top: Pruning shears (secateurs) are preferred for small diameter branches.

Bottom: A pruning saw is a better tool when working on larger branches.

Not shown: Loppers are used to prune shrubs and remove fruit tree suckers.

Placement of the pruning cut

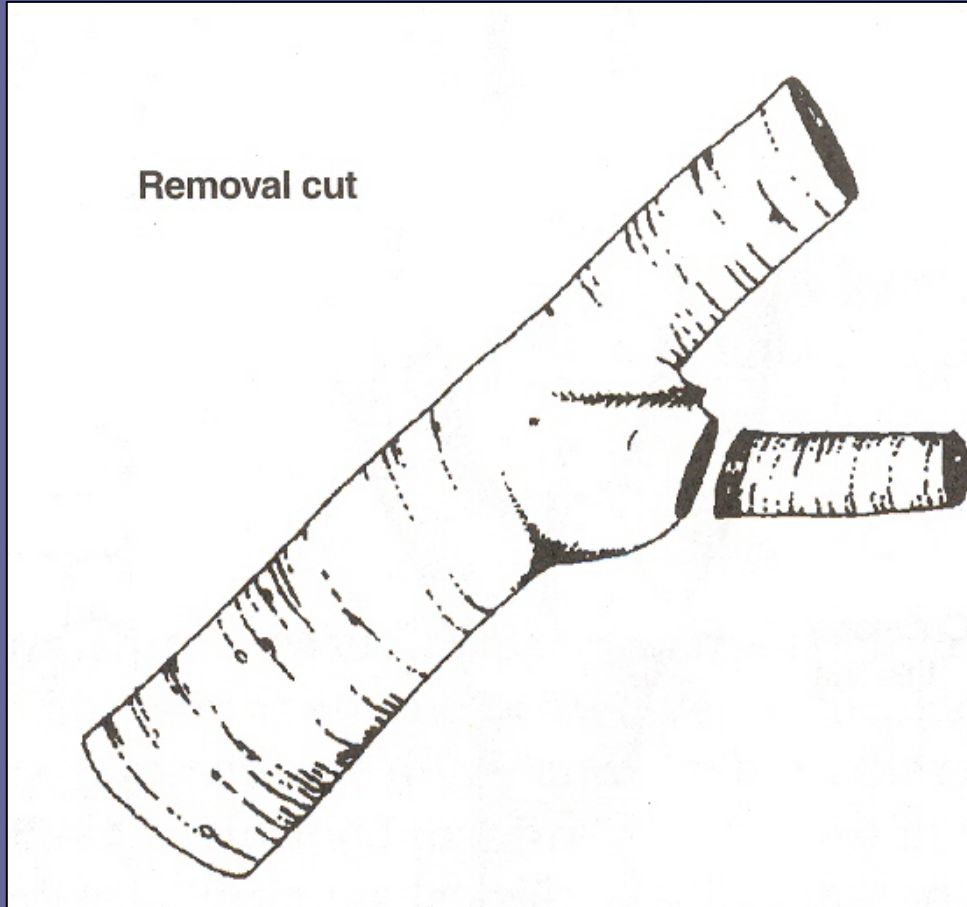
Prune outside the branch collar and the branch bark ridge.



This area of the branch is often visible as a slight swelling near the attachment point. An intact branch collar protects the tree from infection by external diseases.

The “removal” pruning cut

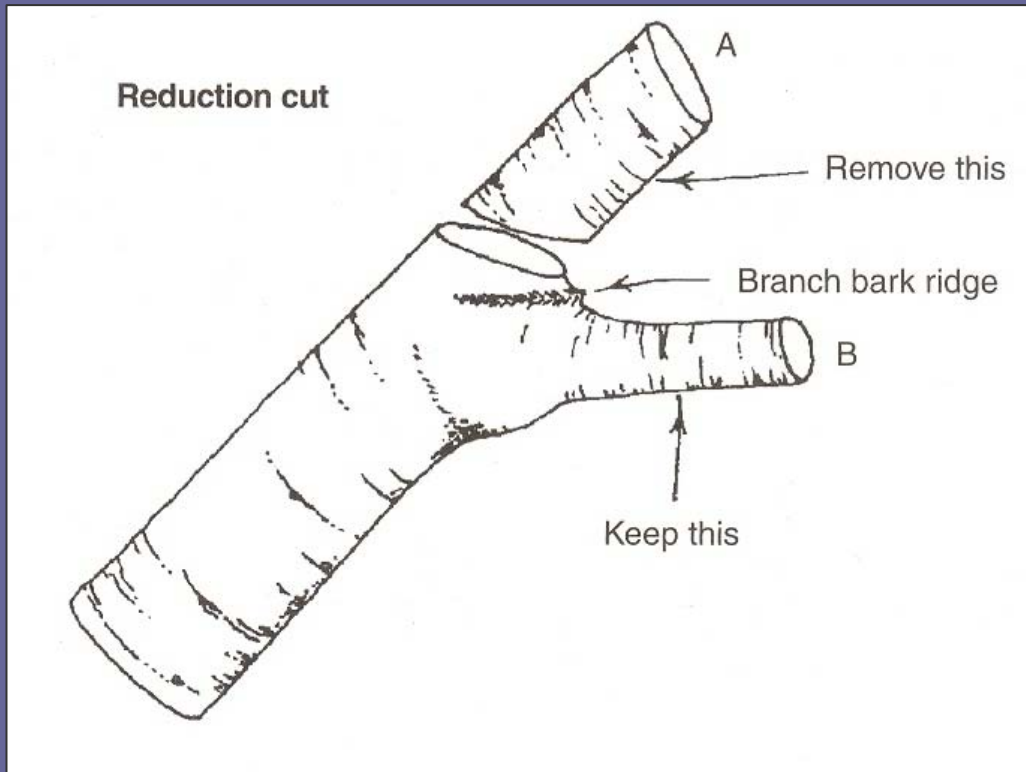
This cut is used to remove a whole branch.



The removal cut is placed outside the branch bark ridge.
A branch can be removed from the trunk or from a larger branch.

The “reduction” pruning cut

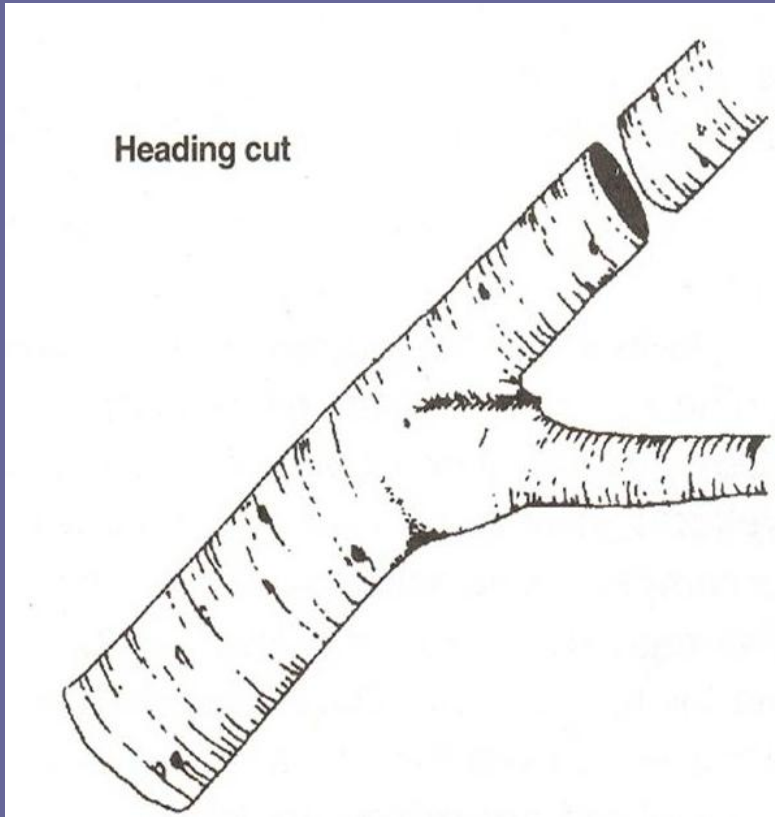
Use this cut to shorten a branch.



A reduction cut redirects growth to a side branch that is similar size or slightly smaller. This cut is used on branches that are too long or partially damaged.

The “heading” pruning cut

This cut is used to stimulate branching, for example in shrubs and fruit trees.



A heading cut is made between nodes on young, small-diameter branches. Avoid heading cuts on older branches as it can initiate decay and dieback.

Large side branch

Remove a large side branch or use a reduction cut to slow its growth.



A large side branch is weakly attached and may easily break.

This is best done when trees are young. Avoid pruning large diameter, older branches.

Long branches that compete with the leader

Remove or reduce these branches.



The left picture shows multiple side branches that are longer than the leader.
The right picture shows a single, dominant, straight leader.

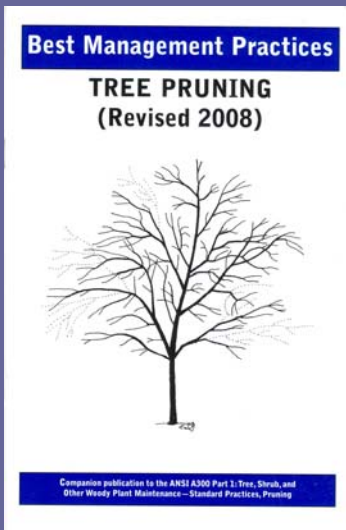
Industry Standards

Pruning newly planted trees



“Pruning at the time of planting shall be limited to the minimum necessary to remove dead, diseased, damaged, and defective branches.”

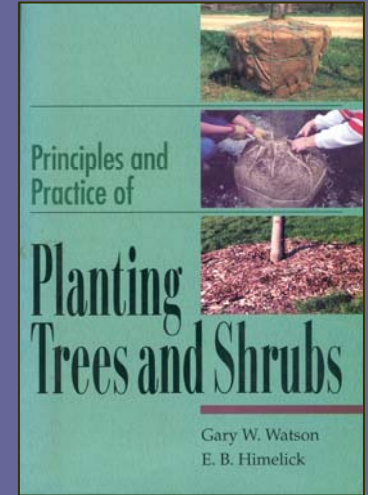
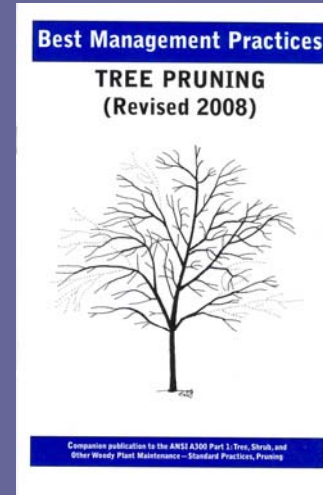
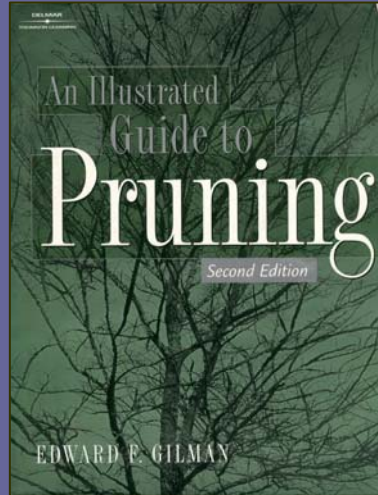
*The British Columbia Landscape Standard (2008)
British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects &
and British Columbia Landscape & Nursery Association*



“Structural pruning is used on young and medium-aged trees to help engineer a sustainable trunk and branch arrangement. Waiting until the tree grows larger makes structural pruning difficult and is more damaging to the tree.”

*Best Management Practices Tree Pruning (2008)
International Society of Arboriculture*

For more details, consult these publications



Available from BCLNA
(B.C. Landscape and Nursery Association)
<http://bclna.com/bc-landscape-standards/>

Available from ISA
(International Society of Arboriculture)
<http://secure.isa-arbor.com/webstore/>

Drawings adapted from E.F. Gilman. 2002. *An Illustrated Guide to Pruning*. Second Edition. Publisher Delmar Thomson Learning
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