

WHEN TO PRUNE??

That is a very good question. It depends on why you are pruning. Light pruning and removal of dead wood can be done anytime. Otherwise, here are some guidelines to take into consideration, but remember that individual trees may differ.

Winter time is the most common practice, because of dormancy. It is usually best to wait until the coldest part of winter is over. The result is a burst of vigorous new growth if that is the desired effect you are looking for. Some species may “bleed” such a maple, walnut and birch when the sap starts to flow. This is not harmful and will stop when the tree leafs out.

Summer time pruning should be done after the seasonal growth to slow or dwarf the development of a tree. The reason for the slowing is to reduce the leaf surface, that then reduces the amount of food manufactured and sent back to the roots for root development and next year crown growth. Don’t confuse this with topping of a tree. Dead or defective branches can also be seen easier or if a limb will hang down to low under the weight of leaves.

Fall isn’t in most cases time to trim because decay fungi spread their spores and healing wounds seem to be slower.

Flowering Trees or Shrubs - The purpose for pruning is to enhance the flowering of the tree or shrubs. For trees or shrubs that bloom in Summer or Fall on current years growth – prune in winter.

For trees and shrubs that bloom in Spring on one year old growth – (dogwood, flowering fruit trees) prune when the flowers are dying.

Note: In some area diseases and insects may affect the time of pruning.
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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.