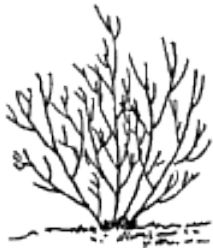


### Best Practices: Pruning Shrubs

Before



Thinning

After



#### Deciduous Shrubs

The pruning recommended for most deciduous shrubs consists of **thinning out**, gradual renewal, and rejuvenation pruning. In thinning out, a branch or twig is cut off either at its point of origin from the parent stem, to a lateral side branch, to be "Y" of a branch junction, or at ground level. Thin out the oldest and tallest stems first, to allow for growth of vigorous side branches. This method of pruning results in a more open plant and does not stimulate excessive new top growth. Considerable growth can be cut out without changing the plant's natural appearance or habit of growth. Plants can be maintained at a given height and width for years by thinning out. This method of pruning is best done with pruning shears, loppers, or a saw (not hedge shears).

Before



Gradual Renewal

After



In **gradual renewal** pruning, a few of the oldest and tallest branches are removed at or slightly above ground level on an annual basis. Some thinning may be necessary to shorten long branches or maintain a symmetrical shape.

To **rejuvenate** an old, overgrown shrub, 1/3 of the oldest, tallest branches can be removed at or slightly above ground level before new growth starts.

When the shrub to be pruned is grown for its flowers, the pruning must be timed to minimize disruption of the blooming. Spring flowering shrubs bloom on last season's growth and should be pruned soon after they bloom. This allows for vigorous growth during the summer, to provide flower buds for the following year.

\* Information provided by the Master Gardener manual.

### Tree Care Tips: How to avoid problems when planting new trees

Winter can be a great time to plant new trees. Just be careful to avoid frost sensitive varieties (check with your nursery), which will need to wait until warmer temps return.

When planting a new tree its best to plant smaller trees from large containers rather than large trees that have been sitting in small containers. By doing this you can avoid planting a tree with girdling roots (roots that grow in circles around the base of the tree). Girdling roots will eventually choke and stress the tree and cannot function as anchor roots to support the tree in strong winds.

Select the appropriate location when planting trees. Remember, some trees get very big and should be planted in an area where they can grow to their full potential. By picking the appropriate planting space, you can avoid damaging the structure of the tree and avoid damaging your property. You won't need to worry about damage to the walls, sidewalks, pool decks or the tiles on your roof. Also, if you like grass, don't plant a tree in the middle of your lawn. Grass needs sunlight and the tree is only going to shade it out. Avoid over watering trees; not only is this bad for the tree but this usually leads to shallow roots and thicker water vessels used to transport nutrients up

and down the tree, which in turn will affect the wood density, making them more prone to storm damage and breaking branches (especially with desert species).

Last but not least, always consult with an arborist before doing any pruning. Improper pruning can result in poor tree structure; wounding the tree in a way that cannot heal and close leaving it open to disease and pest problems. Improper pruning can increase the chances of having a hazardous tree later on as it grows and establishes itself. Improper pruning will prove to be problematic if left unattended.

#### Jim's Tips

##### Watering:

Plants and Trees don't require much water Dec-Feb. Set your timers to run 2 -3 times/ month for 1-2 hours.

Overseeded turf will require regular watering 2-4 times per week for 12-15 minutes depending on spacing and size of heads.

Non-Overseeded turf will only require 2 or 3 short waterings per Month. Try 10-15 minutes watering time depending on spacing and the size of heads.

##### Turf :

If you overseeded your lawn it is probably in need of some fertilizer, with the rains we have received recently your rye is probably in need of some nutrients. A fertilizer that contains nitrate nitrogen is about the only product that will be effective with the soil being cold and microbe activity low.

A product with a ratio of 15.5-0-0 applied at the manufactures recommended rate is what I prefer; a quality, locally owned nursery can help you choose the right product for your needs.

##### What about those Weeds?

With the rains I mentioned previously come the WEEDS, it's too late to apply a pre emergent herbicide to control the winter weeds; this must be applied before the seasonal rains. But applying pre emergent now will help control the summer weeds.

A good post emergent herbicide can be applied to the weeds that have begun to grow, catch them early as they are much more vulnerable when they are young. Again, a quality LOCALLY owned nursery can help you with product selection

James R Potts  
Horticulturist, ACLP, CDLP, Certified  
Arborist, ACPA, CTP, MG

See the Reverse Side for a list of pruning recommendations for some of Arizona's most popular plants.

# Blooming Season and Pruning Recommendations of Some Common Shrubs For Low and Medium Elevations in Arizona

Prepared by Dr. Ursula K. Schuch, Ornamental Horticulture Specialist, Plant Sciences Department, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

Scientific Name	Common Name	Blooming Season	Pruning
<i>Bougainvillea sp.</i>	Bougainvillea	Spring to fall flowering.	Prune dead wood or frost damage in early spring. Remove offshoots or too vigorous growth as needed.
<i>Caesalpinia pulcherrima</i>	Red Bird of Paradise	Flowers from late spring to fall.	Major pruning in late winter, early spring. If stems are twiggy, cut C. pulcherrima to 6-12" above ground. Light midsummer pruning to control size.
<i>C. gilliesii</i>	Desert Bird of Paradise		
<i>C. mexicana</i>	Mexican Bird of Paradise		
<i>Calliandra californica</i>	Baja Red Fairy Duster	Spring to fall flowering.	Light, natural pruning in later spring after first flowering.
<i>C. eriophylla</i>	Pink Fairy Duster		
<i>Carissa grandiflora</i>	Natal Plum	Flowers on new growth in early summer.	Remove damaged wood after frost, vertical sprouts as needed. Avoid shearing.
<i>Cassia artemisioides</i>	Feathery Cassia	Flowers late winter to spring.	Don't prune unless size needs to be controlled. If necessary, prune after flowering while temperatures are still cool.
<i>C. nemophila</i>	Green Cassia		
<i>C. phyllodenia</i>	Silvery Cassia		
<i>Dalea bicolor</i>	Silver dalea	Fall blooming	Prune vigorous species by one third to one half during winter dormant period.
<i>D. dorycnioides</i>		Fall to winter and spring	
<i>D. frutescens</i>	Black Dalea	Late summer and fall	
<i>D. lutea</i>	Yellow Bush Dalea	Late fall	
<i>Dodonea viscosa</i>	Hop Bush	Flowers insignificant, decorative pink, papery winged seed in late spring, sometimes late summer.	No pruning necessary unless size control desired. Can be pruned any time.
<i>Encelia farinosa</i>	Brittle Bush	Spring flowering	From second year on, cut back to 6" after flowering.
<i>Jasminum mesnyi</i>	Primrose Jasmin	Flowers on previous season's growth in winter or early spring.	Prune lightly as needed.
<i>Justicia californica</i>	Chuparosa	Spring blooming and intermittent during summer and fall.	No or little pruning needed. Remove old woody stems to rejuvenate. Light pruning after spring if desired.
<i>J. spicigera</i>	Mexican honeysuckle		
<i>Lantana sp.</i>	Lantana	Spring through fall flowering.	Cut to ground in March to remove frost damaged wood. Prune during growing season to control shape if necessary.
<i>Leucophyllum candidum</i>	'Silver Cloud' and 'Thunder Cloud'	Summer and fall flowering	No pruning required if selected for the appropriate space. Selected pruning can be done in early spring. Don't shear.
	Texas Ranger		
<i>L. frutescens</i>	Chihuahuan Sage		
<i>L. laevigatum</i>			
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Heavenly Bamboo	Spring flowering.	Little pruning required. Rejuvenate older plants by selective thinning at the base.
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Flowers late spring to fall.	Thin in spring/early summer or after bloom, remove old wood. Don't shear.
<i>Pittosporum tobira</i>	Pittosporum	Spring flowering.	No pruning necessary. Offshoots may be removed.
'Wheeler's Dwarf'			
<i>Pyracantha sp.</i>	Firethorn	Spring flowering on previous season's growth.	Prune late fall, after flowering in spring, and during the growing season.
<i>Raphiolepis indica</i>	Indian Hawthorn	Spring flowering.	Light pruning after flowering.
<i>Rosemarinus officinalis</i>	Creeping Rosemary	Early spring flowering.	Prune after flowering in spring to control shape or cut back to woody stems to rejuvenate.
'Prostrata'			
<i>Salvia chamaedryoides</i>	Blue Sage	Spring, or spring through summer.	Cut back old stems in winter or early spring. Deadhead spent flower stems.
<i>S. clevelandii</i>	Chaparral Sage		
<i>S. greggii</i>	Autumn Sage		
<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Yellow Trumpet Flower	Spring to fall flowering.	Prune dead wood in early spring, otherwise light pruning as needed.

## References

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