

## Glossary of Terms: Pruning

**Adventitious Growth** – stems originating from places on a tree or roots where they would not normally grow, i.e., the apical meristem (from the tip of stems), usually as the result of stress from drought, soil compression, pruning, etc., and which would normally be pruned.



**Anvil pruner/lopper** – a type of pruning shear that upon closing has the upper blade contacting a flat lower jaw. Not recommended due to the crushing action of the cut. See “Bypass pruner...” and “Hand pruner...”.

**Branch bark collar** – the feature of a tree branch at the point where it originates from the trunk or another branch. At this site, a layer of wood is added each year from both the new branch and the one that it originates from, creating a strong junction. This area is also where woundwood originates to seal off decay if the area is injured by pruning.



**Branch bark ridge** – the feature of a tree branch comprised of a slightly raised bark line at the point where a branch grows from the trunk or another branch.



**Bypass pruner/lopper** - a type of pruning shear that upon closing has the upper blade bypass the lower jaw, being the preferred design. See "Anvil pruner..." and "Hand pruner..."

**Circling Root** – a root that grows around the trunk of a tree in a circular pattern. These roots never straighten out, provide little support for the tree and have a limited area from which to draw water and nutrients. They are typically pruned at the time of planting.



**CODIT (Compartmentalization of Decay in Trees)** - the concept that holds that when a branch is damaged by natural events or pruning, chemicals are released in nearby cells that form "walls" to block water, insects and microbes from entering the tree, and decay from spreading.

**Codominant Leads or Stems** - Two or more stems, one of which is at least half the size of the other, competing with each other for dominance and creating a weak point in the leader.



**Crepe Murder** – common term for topping crepe myrtles. This is an especially common form of topping used to control the height of crepe myrtles or erroneously, to attempt to improve flowering.



**Flush Cut** – an outdated, and often injurious pruning technique intended to leave a more attractive post-pruning appearance, but which removes much of the branch bark collar, undermining the ability of the tree to seal the wound.



**Girdling Root** – a root that grows on the surface around the trunk of a tree in direct contact with it, impeding the flow of water, food and nutrients through the vascular tissue. Generally, girdling roots should be pruned.



**Hand Pruner/Pruning Shears** – heavy-duty hand cutting tools that can sever vines or branches up to an inch thick. See also “Anvil pruner...” and “Bypass pruner...”.



**Lateral branches** – secondary branches that grow from scaffold branches in a tree’s crown.

**Leader** – the main upright stem of a tree.

**Loppers** - long-handled version of pruning shears.



**Painting/Sealing Pruning Wounds** – an outdated technique to be avoided. It was intended to seal a pruning wound against intrusion of water, insects, microbes, etc., that could be harmful to the tree. At best this technique has no effect on the tree and is more likely to impede the tree’s natural capability to seal wounds.

**Pole Saw/Cutter** – Long-handled version of a pruning saw or pruning shears, some of which are combination tools with both a saw blade and shears.



**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** equipment and apparel such as boots, gloves, goggles, helmets, etc., intended to protect the wearer from the elements, tools, falling branches, thorns, etc.

**Pruning** – selective removal of specific plant parts for health, safety, or aesthetic reasons; to improve access; or to stimulate production in orchard trees.

**Reduction/Subordination** – an option to removing an entire codominant lead (thinning). It may involve a reduction cut or removing some of the co-dominant lead's branches to reduce its ability to compete with the branch chosen as the dominant lead.

**Reduction cut** – removal of a portion of a branch or stem vs. thinning (removal of the entire branch or stem.)

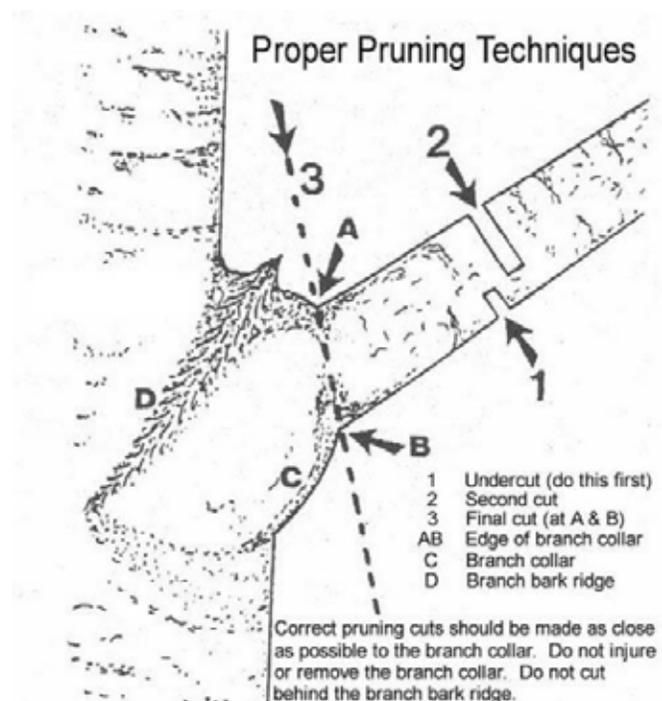
**Scaffold branches** – the primary limbs that form a tree's canopy.

**Stub** – residual wood left when a pruning cut is made too far outward from the branch bark collar, leaving the tree unable to seal the wound and allowing decay to enter the tree.



**Thinning cut** – removal of an entire branch or stem vs. a reduction cut which removes only part of the branch or stem.

**Three cut method** – a pruning technique used when removing a large branch to prevent the branch breaking or bark from stripping.



**Topping** - a significantly detrimental pruning technique involving the indiscriminate cutting of tree branches to stubs or to lateral branches, leading to decay, weak sprout attachment, overall structural weakness and major maintenance requirements for the time the tree survives.



**Two cut method** – a pruning technique used when a branch is too large to be cut with a single cut. The first cut, referred to as an undercut, is made at the bottom of the branch about a third of the way into it in order to cut the wood to prevent splitting and the bark to avoid stripping. The second cut is made from the top down to meet the lower cut. The photo to the right shows the undercut already made and the second cut partially completed.



**Undercut** – a pruning cut made from the bottom of a larger branch which is being removed in order avoid the branch splitting or the bark stripping when the overcut is made using the two- or three-cut methods. (See image of two-cut method, above.)

**Woundwood** – wood that grows outward from all around the branch bark collar to seal a break or a pruning cut against incursion of insects, water, microbes, etc., that can harm the tree.

