

Pruning Seasonal Timetable

Spring

- Bush, shrub, climbing & standard roses
- Late summer or autumn flowering shrubs
- Herbaceous perennials if not done in the autumn

Late Spring

- After flowering – forsythia, ribes, spiraea, viburnum

Summer

- After flowering – broom, deutzia, philadelphus, lilac, rosemary etc
- Some fruit trees

Late Summer (August – September)

- Trim evergreen hedges – box, yew, privet
- Prune rambler roses

Autumn (and/or Spring)

- Cut down stems of herbaceous perennials

Winter

- Fruit trees & bushes producing pip fruits
- Remove dead & diseased branches of trees & shrubs
- Cut hazel branches for use as pea sticks & supports for herbaceous plants

Late Winter (February)

- Some Clematis Types
- Shrubs grown for their colourful stems eg Cornus & Salix
- After flowering – broom, deutzia, philadelphus, lilac, rosemary etc
- Some fruit trees
- plants

Pruning Techniques

The 4 D's rule

The first rule of pruning is to apply the “4 D's rule” which is the immediate removal of any plant material that is –

DEAD

DYING

DISEASED

Or

DAMAGED

Next

Remove thin, weak, or straggly shoots

Then prune back or remove to achieve well balanced growth &

REMEMBER – work with the habit of the plant

Positioning Pruning Cuts

- Always cut back to a bud facing in the required direction of growth
- Clean cut just above (1/4 inch) & sloping gently away from the selected healthy bud
- Plants where buds are arranged in opposite pairs prune by cutting at right angles to the stem just above a pair of buds but as close as possible without damaging
- The more of the shoot that is removed the stronger the regrowth
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Pruning Shrubs

Shrubs Flowering on old wood

- Immediately after flowering
- Remove stems that have flowered
- If stems are overcrowded, remove some of the oldest at ground level or where they shoot from the parent stem
- Remove weak, spindly & crossed branches
- Observe “one in three” rule
- Cosmetic prune

Shrubs Flowering on new wood

- In early spring prune for health
- Cut back all remaining stems to within two or three buds of old wood

Evergreen Shrubs

- Best time to prune late spring or early summer

WARNING

Some plants will die if you cut back into old wood eg Broom, Lavender, Sage

Pruning Clematis

Clematis are generally divided into three main pruning groups. Clematis that flower in the spring require no pruning (pruning group one), those that flower in early summer require light pruning (pruning group two) & those that flower from mid summer onwards require hard pruning (pruning group three).

Pruning Group One

These flower in the spring eg C Montana on stems that that grew & ripened in the previous year, so any pruning removes potential flowering wood. Therefore they are only pruned to thin them when absolutely necessary. If pruning do this in late winter or after flowering. SOME can be hard pruned after flowering ie Alpinas, Macropetalas, C barbellata, C cirrhosa, C koreana, C pruinina

Pruning Group Two

This group includes all the large flowered hybrids that bloom in early summer. Their flowers are borne on the side shoots that grow from the previous year's ripened stems. Therefore they must not be hard pruned if flowers are to form, but light pruning will stimulate more flowering side shoots on the stems that remain. They should be sited & trained so that you can gain access to the stems to prune lightly in late winter when you prune back to strong growth & buds leaving a good framework. Cut out any weak or damaged growth & all twiggy side shoots back to its point of origin or down to the ground. Cut back remaining stems to a pair of healthy buds, leaving an evenly spaced framework of strong growth. The pruned stems will produce flowering shoots.

Alternatively, Group 2 clematis can be grown with minimal pruning, cutting back hard every three or four years. The first flush of flowers is lost after hard pruning, but the second has larger plentiful blooms.

You can also prolong the flowering season of Gp 2 clematis if you stagger the pruning by cutting back some shoots to healthy buds later than others.

Group 2 includes all the early large flowered hybrids, singles & doubles.

Pruning Group Three

These are mid season to late flowering clematis & the easiest to understand their pruning requirements – simply cut the lot back in late winter or early spring. Strong new stems will then grow vigorously & bear flowers all in a single season.

This group includes herbaceous clematis & texensis. Remove any dead growth & be careful not to damage any new shoots coming from the base. Cut back the remaining stems just above a pair of healthy buds 15 to 30 cm above ground level. Make a straight cut across the stem. Prune as growth starts so you can cut stems back to good buds.