

# A Videotape to Demonstrate Pruning Techniques

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Additional index words. cultural practices, gardening, tape, woody plants

Interest in pruning landscape plants is increasing as people realize that attractive trees and shrubs increase aesthetic and property values of homes. In order to illustrate how to prune plants to enhance their appearance and health, a videotape was developed that demonstrates pruning techniques for various woody landscape plants. The tape, "Pruning Your Own Shrubs and Small Trees", is intended to be used as a learning tool by homeowners, horticulture students, cooperative extension agents, and landscape maintenance personnel.

The first part of the videotape covers pruning tools, sanitation, diseased plants, and types of pruning cuts. Since the first steps involved in good pruning are to use the proper tools and sanitation procedures (1), the tape begins by showing hand pruners, loppers, hedge shears, and two types of pruning saws. Their use on specific branch sizes is described and methods to disinfest these tools are shown. Sanitation procedures are demonstrated as a diseased plant is pruned to remove dead parts. Heading and thinning cuts are demonstrated early in the videotape so that the viewer can become familiar with these types of cuts before seeing pruning practices for specific plants.

In the second part of the tape, specific pruning techniques are demonstrated for five

categories of plants (Table 1). The effects of pruning plants at various times of the year are emphasized for deciduous shrubs and trees. Specifics of when to prune plants grown for flowers, fruit, or foliage are presented. Correcting structural problems and removing dead branches are demonstrated for these plants. Desirable angles of branch attachment and spacing of scaffold limbs are shown for the deciduous trees.

Distribution of latent buds or growing points is emphasized for coniferous trees and shrubs, since these buds are distributed differently than those on deciduous species (1). Since latent bud distribution differs between pine and fir (1), the viewer is shown how to identify these two species correctly. Proper timing and techniques for pruning pines are demonstrated. Pruning techniques that result in formal and informal appearances are demonstrated for various evergreen shrubs. A

globe arborvitae is pruned to form a rounded, dense plant (formal appearance), whereas a Pfitzer juniper is pruned to retain its natural shape with loose, open foliage (informal appearance).

Pruning broadleaf evergreens is the last plant category covered in the videotape. Pruning boxwood plants into a formal hedge is demonstrated with the proper shape of the hedge being emphasized.

One advantage of this videotape is that it shows actual pruning sequences, starting with an unsightly or overgrown plant and leading to the finished product. These sequences allow the viewer to see all the steps involved in various pruning techniques and to compare the plant's appearance before and after pruning. A table of contents and an on-screen time clock make it easy to locate various subjects on the tape and readily allow the viewer to refer back to specific sections as needed.

The videotape is 51 minutes long and is available in VHS, Beta, and 3/4-inch formats. The tape has recently been released and may be obtained for a nominal charge from the Agricultural Communications Center, Room 11 Agr. Sci. Bldg., Univ. of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83843.

### Literature Cited

1. Harris, R.W. 1983. Arboriculture: Care of trees, shrubs and vines in the landscape. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

Table 1. Pruning practices demonstrated on various plant species in the videotape.

Plant	Scientific name	Reason for pruning
Deciduous shrubs		
Common lilac	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	Reduce size
Coral dogwood	<i>Cornus alba</i> 'Sibirica'	Rejuvenate plant
Deciduous trees		
Kentucky coffeetree	<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>	Correct structural problems
Flowering crabapple	<i>Malus</i> 'Nanson'	Open plant interior
Coniferous shrubs		
Globe arborvitae	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> 'Woodwardii'	Maintain shape
Pfitzer juniper	<i>Juniperus chinensis</i> 'Pfitzeriana'	Reduce size
Coniferous trees		
Mugo pine	<i>Pinus mugo</i>	Increase density
Scotch pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Maintain shape
Colorado spruce	<i>Picea pungens</i>	Maintain shape
Broadleaf evergreen		
Common boxwood	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Maintain shape

Received for publication 15 June 1987. Idaho Agr. Expt. Sta. Research Paper no. 87731. The cost of publishing this paper was defrayed in part by the payment of page charges. Under postal regulations, this paper therefore must be hereby marked advertisement solely to indicate this fact.

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