



Prune shrubs and small trees

AHCPGD203

By the end of this topic, you should be able to:

- Identify pruning requirements
- Undertake pruning of shrubs and small trees
 - Small trees are those less than 3m in height

What is pruning?

- Trees and shrubs have varying growth habits and may, on occasion, need to be pruned. For example:
 - To change the plant's appearance and shape, height/spread, root system
 - Correction or control of growth
 - Providing ornamental effects or aesthetic appeal
 - Providing clearance for services, access or cultural practices
 - To improve the plant's health
 - Removing dead or diseased material
 - Compartmentalisation of decay in trees (CODIT) to prevent disease
 - To control/improve quantity and quality of flowers and fruit

What is pruning?

- There are a range of pruning methods:

Method	Definition
Deadheading	The removal of spent flowers
Espalier pruning	Pruning to train plants to grow along a wall or fence
Shearing	The removal of many growing tips at the same time
Thinning	The removal of entire shoots or branches from a major stem or trunk
Tip pruning	The removal of growing tips 4-10cm from the end

What is pruning?

- Pruning requirements differ from plant to plant. For example:
 - Annual plants do not need pruning – apart from deadheading
 - Water plants do not need to be pruned
- Each species has a particular time of the year that is best for pruning.
 - The pruning tools you select will be influenced by the climate conditions.

- To prepare for pruning tasks, you should familiarise yourself with the following:
 - Task requirements
 - Identify plants that require pruning according to the pruning program and directions
 - Confirm pruning method to be used with the supervisor
 - Apply active listening when receiving instructions
 - Clarify any unclear instructions with your supervisor

- To prepare for pruning tasks, you should familiarise yourself with the following:
 - **Workplace information**
 - This may be site-specific information, such as a site safety plan
 - Laws applicable to your workplace, such as:
 - Acts [e.g. *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*]
 - Regulations [e.g. *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)*]
 - Codes of Practice [e.g. *How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011 (Qld)*; *Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice 2011 (Qld)*]
 - Applicable Standards, including:
 - AS 4373 which addresses pruning of amenity trees, including:
 - Considerations before pruning
 - Pruning procedures and unacceptable practices
 - Reducing the risk of branch failure, pathogen infection and premature death

- To prepare for pruning tasks, you should familiarise yourself with the following:
 - **Work area**
 - Identify any WHS hazards (e.g. injuries to your person, heat stroke, sunburn, injuries from equipment, large limbs twisting/dropping, plants with thorns/spines, allergies)
 - Consider 'PDP': People, Direction and Plants
 - Rectify and/or report hazards to your supervisor within a timely fashion – especially emergency situations

- To prepare for pruning tasks, you should familiarise yourself with the following:
 - Available PPE, tools and equipment
 - PPE may include: Gloves, protective clothing, wide brimmed hat, work boots
 - Safety equipment may include: Barricades and signage to warn others of dangers
 - Tools and equipment may include:
 - Aerial pruners, extension or pole pruners (High branches)
 - Long handled loppers (Thinning)
 - Pruning saw (Thinning)
 - Secateurs (Deadheading, Sucker removal, Thinning, Tip pruning)
 - Ensure they are appropriately selected, prepared and used for the task (e.g. pre-operational and safety checks), following the operator's manual
 - You are also required to document and follow low risk work procedures for using machinery, equipment and tools

Undertaking pruning

- When pruning plants, you should abide by the following:
 - When selecting tools, consider the location, climate, access and size of the material to be pruned
 - Always prune at an angle
 - When removing large or heavy tree branches, use a three-cut technique to prevent the weight of the branch tearing the bark below the cut
 - Try to minimise environmental disturbance
 - Follow directions given to you by your supervisor
 - Follow recognised procedures (e.g. AS 4373-2007)

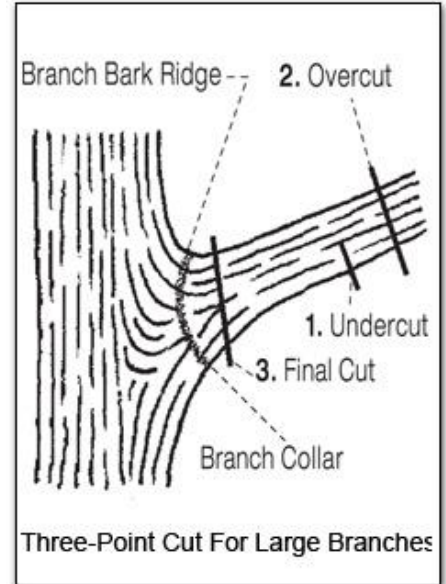
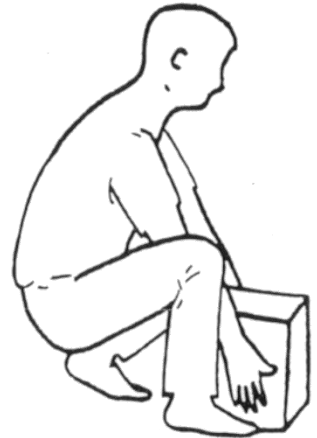


Photo credit: Linda Lucz

- During pruning, you will be undertaking manual handling tasks
 - Be sure to follow appropriate procedures to avoid injury
- Ensure the following:
 - Neck is upright
 - Back has natural curve
 - Feet are flat and facing the load
 - Shoulders are level
 - Knees are bent
 - Hands have a good grip around the load



Completing pruning tasks

- As part of completing pruning tasks, you are required to complete the following practices:
 - Clean up the work area
 - The following equipment may be used: Blower vacuum, Gloves, Mulcher
 - Record and/or report your work outcomes to your supervisor
 - Maintain, clean and store tools and equipment according to manufacturer's specifications
 - Re-fuel as necessary
 - Report faults that are discovered
 - Dispose of materials that cannot be reused or recycled
 - Be discerning with the plant material recycled into mulch. Don't risk the spread of disease.
 - Ensure that you follow the organisation's requirements for handling and disposing of waste