

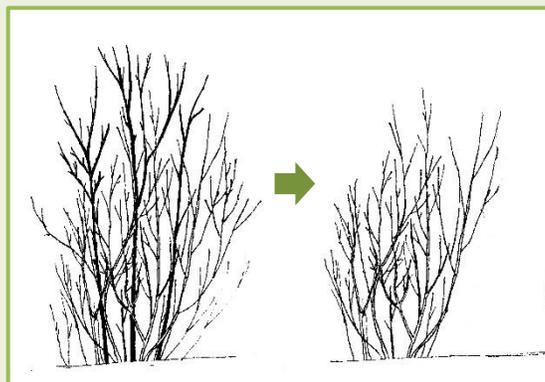
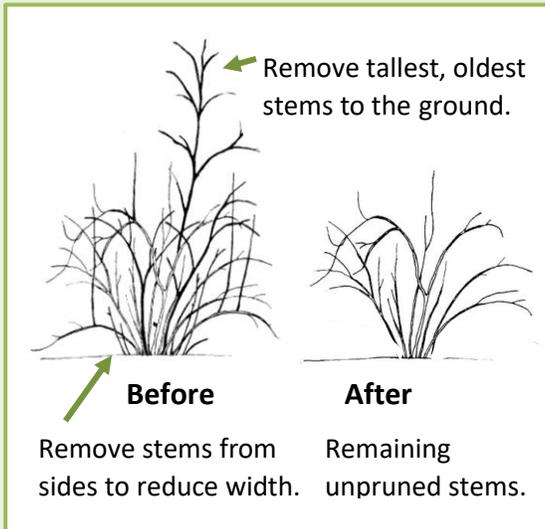
Pruning Shrubs, Simplified!

The common approach of snipping or lopping off branch ends not only disrupts the natural character of the plant, but can also lead to more work and plant stress in the long run. Pruning to natural form is simpler, and less work, than it may seem.

START WITH THE 4-Ds:

Remove dead and damaged stems first. Sometimes this is all that is needed. Next prune out weaker stems that may be dying back or have disease symptoms. Then address the dysfunctional branches, such as wayward growth, severely crowded branches, old branch stubs, and branches overhanging paved areas or pressed up against structures.

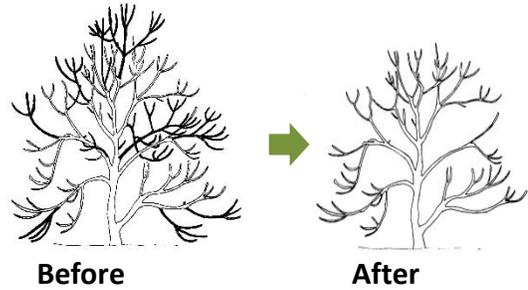
MULTI-STEM SHRUBS



For shrubs like: Spirea, Ninebark, Glossy abelia, Rugosa rose, Red-stem dogwood, Barberry, Lilac, Mock orange.

TREE-LIKE SHRUBS

Prune to natural points of branch attachment using reduction and branch removal cuts.



For shrubs like: Rhododendrons, Camellia, Pieris, Osmanthus, evergreen Euonymus, Enkianthus, Double-file viburnum, Red-flowering currant.

REDUCTION CUT



Use this cut to shorten growth. Place the cut above a lateral branch of similar diameter that will become the new leader. (sometimes called selective heading). For best results, cut down to a lateral branch that is shorter than the desired height so there is room for new growth.

REMOVAL CUT



Use this cut to remove a lateral (side) branch. Place the cut at the point of branch attachment to a main trunk or stem. (also known as a thinning cut).

Most types of shrubs should not need to be pruned every year just to maintain size. These two types of pruning cuts will preserve natural form and allow for longer periods before pruning is needed again.

PRUNE IN MODERATION: For routine care, it is often better to prune a little bit at a time more often than to remove a lot of growth at once. Reserve shearing and heading cuts for specialized pruning like hedges, hybrid roses, and woody herbs.

Christina Pfeiffer
Horticulture Educator, ISA Certified Arborist

[pnw_monthbymonthgardening](https://www.pnw_monthbymonthgardening.com)
www.christinapfeiffer.net

Pacific Northwest Month-by-Month Gardening, Cool Springs Press

