

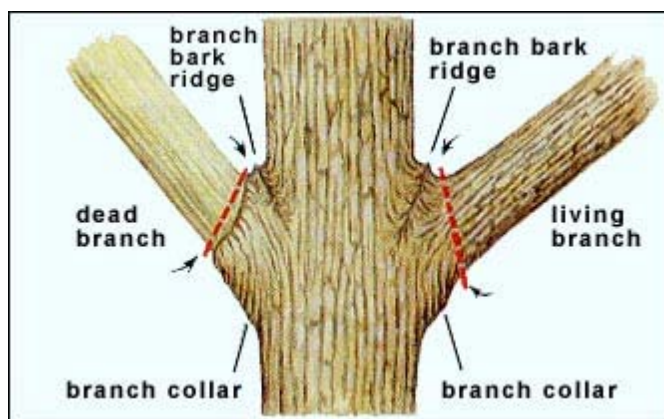
Information Sheet 3 – Pruning

Careful pruning can prevent problems in later life. If a branch is broken it is best to remove it as soon as possible to prevent problems in the future. In young trees if there is competing upright shoots, remove one at an early stage to leave a single main shoot. This can save the tree from possible future branch failure.

We would advise you not to remove anything that cannot be cut with secateurs, the following principles apply to all types of pruning including the removal of stem or basal growth.

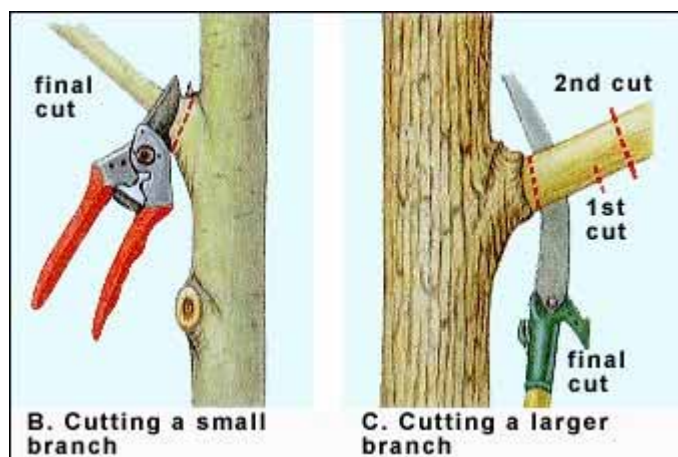
Pruning cuts should be made so that only branch tissue is removed and stem tissue is not damaged. At the point where the branch attaches to the stem, branch and stem tissues remain separate, but are contiguous. If only branch tissues are cut when pruning, the stem tissues of the tree will probably not become decayed, and the wound will seal more effectively.

Pruning living branches



To find the proper place to cut a branch, look for the **branch collar** that grows from the stem tissue at the underside of the base of the branch. On the upper surface, there is usually a **branch bark ridge** that runs (more or less) parallel to the branch angle, along the stem of the tree. A proper pruning cut does not damage either the branch bark ridge or the branch collar.

A proper cut begins just outside the branch bark ridge and angles down away from the stem of the tree, avoiding injury to the branch collar (Fig. 6B). Make the cut as close as possible to the stem, but outside the branch bark ridge, mirroring the angle, so that stem tissue is not injured and the wound can seal in the shortest time possible. If the cut is too far from the stem, leaving a branch stub, the branch tissue usually dies and wound wood forms from the stem tissue. Wound closure is delayed because the wound wood must seal over the stub that was left.



When pruning small branches with hand pruners, make sure the tools are sharp enough to cut the branches cleanly without tearing.

Prune dead branches in much the same way as live branches. Making the correct cut is usually easy because the branch collar and the branch bark ridge can be distinguished from the dead branch because they continue to grow. Make the pruning cut just outside of the ring of wound wood tissue that has formed, being careful not to cause unnecessary injury.

Take care and if you don't feel confident doing it tell us and we will!

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