

# Pruning Tips: Trees and Shrubs

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Shrubs and ornamental trees do benefit from maintenance trimming and shaping. If shrubs, particularly those with medium and fast growth rates, are allowed to grow without restraint, certain species can begin to look overgrown and unattractive. Once a shrub or ornamental tree is established, seasonal pruning and annual or periodic (every 2 years) trimming is essential and will help the plant to thrive—and keep its size maintained.

## Spring Pruning

In early spring, inspect your shrubs and small trees for dead or damaged wood. These branches can be removed at any time of year with a sharp set of pruning tools. Try not to aggressively prune any spring flowering shrub until after it has flowered- pruning too early may result in a significant reduction in flowers.

## Cut-Backs

Many, but not all, herbaceous perennials (those that completely die-back over the winter months—like hosta and non-woody flowering plants or ornamental grasses), should be cut back at the very end of fall or early spring before new growth begins. This practice will help keep your perennials and grasses looking spiffy and you won't have unsightly dead foliage to look at during the growing season.