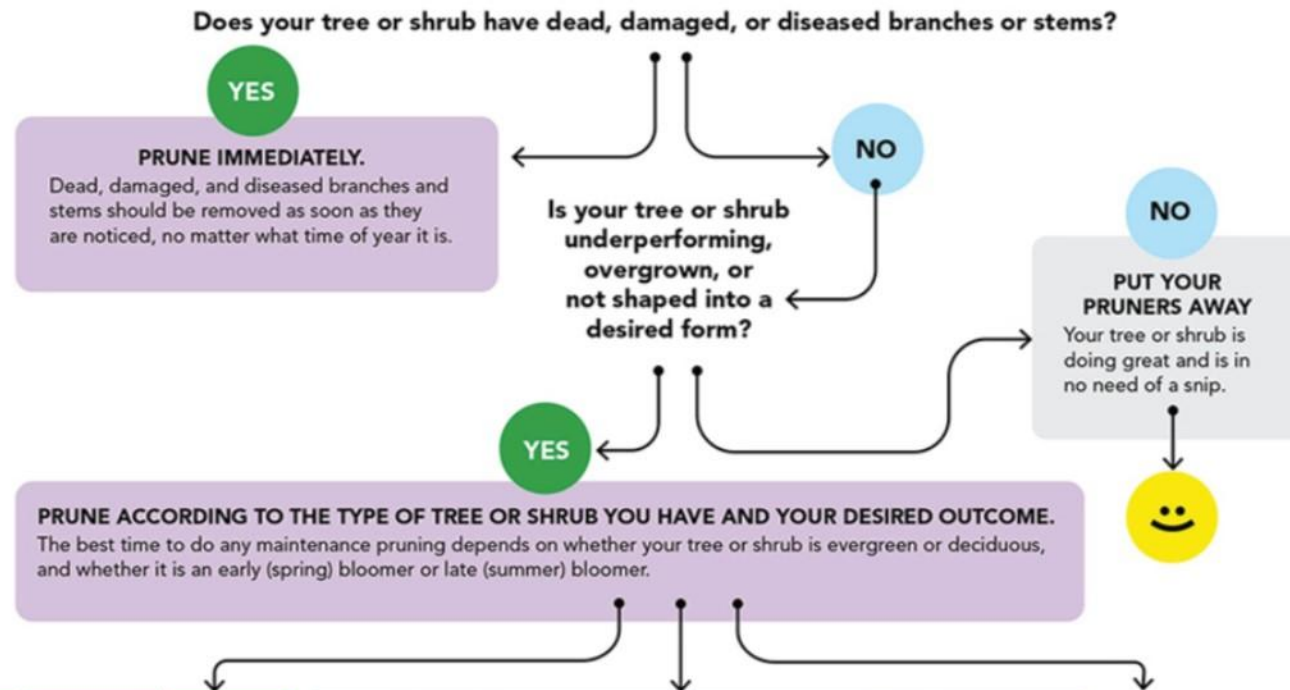


# Determining When to Make the Cut

If you find that all these pruning rules are tough to keep straight, ask yourself the following questions.



## Deciduous spring bloomer (or blooms on old growth)

These woody plants bloom in spring or early in the first half of the gardening season from flower buds that formed in the previous year. They are best pruned right after flowering to ensure that new growth that appears after pruning this season will produce blossom buds for next year. Plants that fall into this category include the following:

1. Bigleaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea macrophylla* and cvs., Zones 5–9)
2. Forsythias (*Forsythia* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–9)
3. Lilacs (*Syringa* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–8)
4. Magnolias (*Magnolia* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–9)
5. Crabapples (*Malus* spp. and cvs., Zones 4–8)



2. Forsythia. Photo: Michelle Gervais



3. Lilac. Photo: Jennifer Benner



4. Magnolia. Photo: Jennifer Benner

## Deciduous summer bloomer (or blooms on new growth)

These woody plants bloom in summer or late in the second half of the gardening season from flower buds that formed in the current year. They are best pruned in late winter or early spring before new growth (which produces the current year's blooms) appears in spring. Plants that fall into this category include the following:

1. Glossy abelias (*Linnaea x grandiflora* cvs., Zones 6–9)
2. Summersweets (*Clethra* spp. and cvs., Zones 5–9)
3. Rose of Sharons (*Hibiscus syriacus*\* and cvs., Zones 5–9)
4. Panicle hydrangeas (*Hydrangea paniculata* and cvs., Zones 3–8)
5. Crape myrtles (*Lagerstroemia indica* and cvs., Zones 7–9)



2. Summersweet. Photo: Michelle Gervais



3. Rose of Sharon. Photo: Michelle Gervais



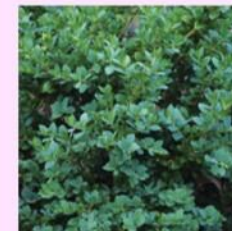
4. Panicle hydrangea. Photo: Michelle Gervais

## Evergreen

This is a complex group. Conifers rarely, if ever, need maintenance pruning. Broadleaf and narrow-leaf evergreens may require an occasional snip in spring after the threat of frost has passed (nonflowering plants) or after blooming (flowering plants). Plants that fall into this broadleaf and narrow-leaf category include the following:

### Prune after last spring frost

1. Boxwoods (*Buxus* spp. and cvs., Zones 4–9)
2. Hollies (*Ilex* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–11)
3. Arborvitae (*Thuja* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–11)



1. Boxwood. Photo: Michelle Gervais



2. Holly. Photo: Jennifer Benner



1. Camellia. Photo: Jennifer Benner

### Prune after flowering

1. Camellias (*Camellia* spp. and cvs., Zones 6–10)
2. Evergreen azaleas and rhododendrons (*Rhododendron* spp. and cvs., Zones 4–8)