



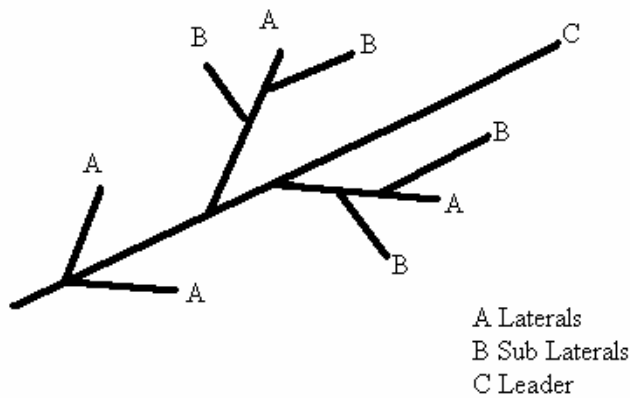
Groves Guide to...

Pruning Fruit Trees 1

Taken from www.grovesnurseries.co.uk

By Steve Ward

Before we start pruning make sure you have the tools for the job; a good pair of secateurs, I recommend Felco, these should last you a lifetime and for larger branches a pruning saw, again use a reputable make. Always make cuts to an outward facing bud 5mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ ") above the bud



• **Figure 1**
Basic terms referred to during pruning

Apples and Pears

- **1st winter**

Cut back the main leader to 25cm (10") above a bud, facing the opposite way to last years growth. Cut side branches to half their length above a bud.

- **2nd winter**

As with the first winter prune the main header to 25cm (10"). Shorten new side branches to half their length and older side branches a third.

- **Subsequent winters**

When the tree reaches your desired height, usually 2-3metres (7-8') cut the main leader back to this height every winter. If there are too many branches remove some and also thin spurs if needed

- **1st Summer**

In mid August cut any laterals back to 2-3 buds or around 7-9cm (3-4")

- **Subsequent Summers**

Cut laterals to 2-3 buds and sub laterals to one bud above the basal cluster.



Note: Tip Bearers

Apples which are tip bearers should not be pruned other than occasional whole branches to stimulate fast growth.



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Plums & Cherries

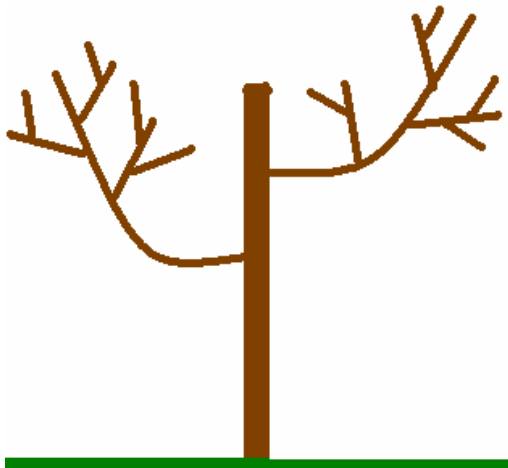
Only prune in full growth usually June-July for the first 2 years take a third off the branch leaders. The only other pruning needed is for rubbing, crossing or damaged branches.

Trained Fruit e.g. Espaliers

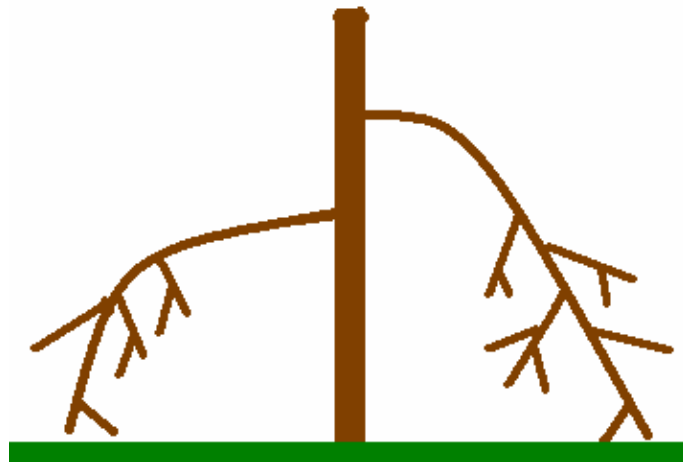
Do the main pruning in mid August. Reduce laterals on the side branches to 2-3 buds. Train the leader vertically. Train the side branches out to form tiers every 46cm (18"). In the winter prune any re-growth of laterals & sub laterals to 2-3 buds.

Unproductive Trees

Tie down vigorous upright shoots on branches in late spring, early summer, when the branches are most flexible. This is called **festooning** and encourages heavier cropping.



1. Before
Unproductive Tree



2. After
Tree Ties down to encourage cropping

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