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YARD 'N' GARDEN



EXTENSION
HORTICULTURISTS

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PRUNING SHRUBS



Avoid pruning and shearing shrubs without a purpose. Never alter the natural growth habit except where a plant has to be confined or trained for a specific purpose. Pruning helps maintain the vigor and attractiveness of shrubs.

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A good pair of pruning shears will make clean cuts with minimum effort. Use hedge shears only for pruning hedges. Lopping shears should be used for removing large canes to the ground.

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Spring blooming shrubs--those blooming on old wood--should be pruned immediately after flowering. These include flowering almond and plum, early spireas, lilacs, azaleas and forsythia.

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Summer blooming shrubs--those that bloom on new growth--should be pruned in late winter or early spring before growth starts. Some shrubs in this group are potentillas, hydrangea, mockoranges, roses and weigelas. Shrubs not grown for their flowers should be pruned in late winter or early spring.

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Old shrubs may be rejuvenated by removing one-third of the old cones annually. These should be removed to the ground.

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Parts of a shrub injured during the winter should be removed. Some shrubs, like the Hills-of-Snow hydrangea and the Anthony Waterer spirea, should be pruned to the ground before growth starts. The dead parts of branches from other shrubs should be removed after growth starts. Twigs and small branches should be removed flush with the main stem or side branch. Stubs are unsightly and serve as entry ways for disease.

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Old and faded flowers of lilacs, hydrangeas, azaleas and roses should be removed. They are unattractive and often form seed which will reduce next year's flower crop.

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When cutting roses for indoor use, cut to an outward-growing, five-leaflet leaf. This helps insure that the plant will be open to allow air circulation through the plant. Make the cut at a 45 degree angle, one-fourth inch above the leaf bud at the base of the leaf.

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