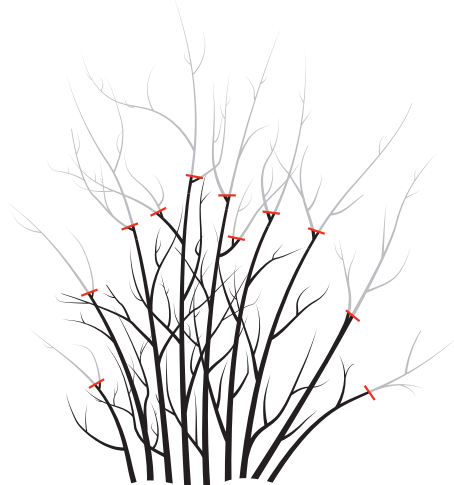


Pruning Demystified

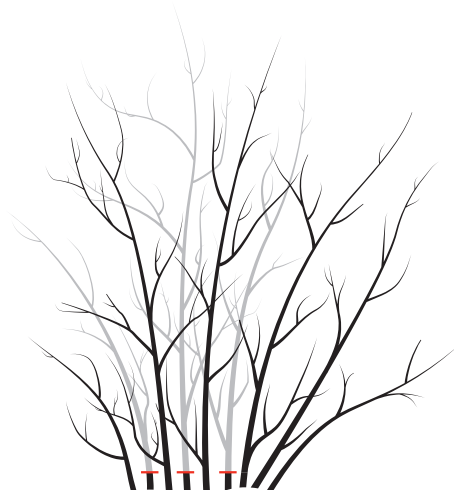
What's the secret of transitioning from a competent gardener to a confident one? Pruning! Though pruning shrubs strikes fear into the hearts of many, it is actually a simple and rewarding process. All you need to do to master it is to understand a few basic principles behind the why, when, and how of pruning shrubs. Once you implement these ideas and techniques, you'll have more flowers and healthier plants in your garden that same season.

How do I prune a shrub?

- Use a pair of sharp bypass pruners for the job. Their scissor-like action makes nice clean cuts.
- Cut stems back to just above a big bud or set of buds. The bigger the bud you cut back to, the thicker and more vigorous the growth that comes from it will be.
- When cutting a stem back, avoid cutting into heavy wood where you can't see any buds.
- Make pruning cuts as small as possible by cutting stems straight across instead of on an angle. This ensures speedy healing.
- Aim to remove about one-third of the plant when pruning. There are two main approaches:



1. Cut back the entire plant more or less evenly. This shortens the stems and ensures that the growth for the year comes from big, vigorous buds further down on the plant.



2. Remove selected stems entirely. This encourages new growth from the base of the plant, improving the health and habit.

Why should I prune a shrub?

When in doubt, don't prune! Most shrubs don't require regular pruning in order to be healthy and beautiful. When you consider pruning a shrub in your yard, first ask yourself **why** you want to prune it. Every subsequent decision you'll make in pruning depends on the reason why you are pruning in the first place, so **never prune without a reason**.

Reasons you may want to prune a shrub:

- Improve flowering and fruiting
- Improve stem color on plants like dogwood
- Improve the plant's habit or shape
- Encourage rebloom
- Neaten a plant's appearance by removing old blooms or wayward shoots
- Rejuvenate or shorten an over-grown shrub
- Create a special feature, like a topiary or formal hedge

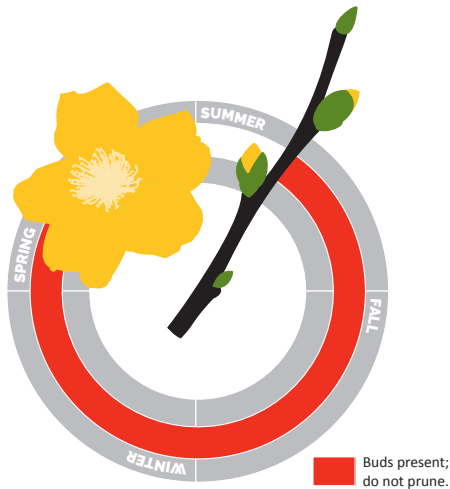
TIP! Most shrubs have an appealing natural habit that doesn't require extensive trimming and shaping. Enjoy your low-maintenance landscape and only prune when necessary.

When do I prune a shrub?

The answer to this depends on whether the shrub in question blooms on old wood or on new wood.

Old Wood

Shrubs that bloom on old wood create their flower buds for the next year almost as soon as they finish blooming during the current year. Shrubs that bloom on old wood have flower buds present for most of the year.



Plants that bloom on old wood should only be pruned immediately after they flower:

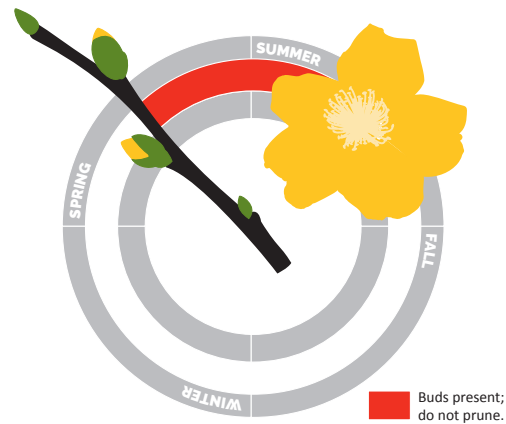
- Azalea
- Deutzia
- Elderberry
- Forsythia
- Lilac
- Loropetalum
- Ninebark
- Pearl-bush
- Quince
- Spirea (blooms on new wood, but prune after flowering for best foliage display)
- Weigela

Generally speaking, the earlier in spring a plant blooms, the more likely it flowers on old wood.

If you are willing to forgo flowers for a year, it's okay to prune shrubs that bloom on old wood in spring.

New Wood

Shrubs that bloom on new wood create their flower buds for the year after new growth has begun in spring. Shrubs that bloom on new wood have flower buds present only during the growing season.



Plants that bloom on new wood may be pruned in spring:

- Bluebeard
- Butterfly bush
- Coral berry
- Diervilla
- Smooth hydrangea
- Panicle hydrangea
- Potentilla
- Red-twig dogwood (blooms on old wood, but best pruned in early spring for longest recovery period)
- Rose of Sharon
- Rose

Try to time pruning such plants so you do it just as the new growth is beginning to emerge on the stems – this allows you to see exactly where healthy new growth is occurring.

Special Cases

- Reblooming plants like Bloomerang® lilac and Bloom-A-Thon® azalea flower on both old wood and on new wood – if they require pruning, the best time to do it is immediately after their spring bloom.
- Evergreens like arborvitae and boxwood are best pruned in spring, after new growth has flushed out.
- Dead wood can be removed any time. Branches that cause a hazard to people, pets, or property should be removed promptly.

Avoid Pruning

For best performance, it's best to avoid pruning the following plants, except to remove dead wood in spring:

- Bigleaf hydrangea
- Oakleaf hydrangea
- Viburnums grown for their berries
- Winterberry holly
- Mountain hydrangea
- Rhododendron



WHY ISN'T MY HYDRANGEA BLOOMING?

Which hydrangea do you grow?
(see reverse)

Smooth

(*H. arborescens*)
or **Panicle**
(*H. paniculata*)



How long ago
did you plant it?

< 2 years

Needs more
time to
develop a
root system.
Mulch and
keep well
watered;
it will bloom
in time.

2+ years

How much
light does it
get?

4+
hours

Did you
cut it
back?

Yes

When?

fall

Deer
damage
or low
light

< 4
hours

Needs
more
sun

No

Deer
damage
or low
light

late
spring/
summer

Buds removed -
blooming may be
delayed or not occur.
Prune in late winter or
early spring.

Bigleaf

(*H. macrophylla*)
or **Mountain**
(*H. serrata*)



Did you cut it back?

Yes

Oops!
You cut off
the flower
buds. Avoid
pruning.

No

Do you live
in a cold
climate?

Yes

Flower buds
were killed by
cold. Move to a
more protected
spot; protect
plant on spring
nights when
frost or freeze
threatens.

No

Too
much
shade
or deer
damage

But it's a reblooming
hydrangea!

Not all reblooming
hydrangeas are equal
- some need to reach
a certain height to set
new wood buds. Let's
Dance® reblooming
hydrangeas were
developed to bloom
sooner.

Climbing

(*H. petiolaris*)
or **Oakleaf**
(*H. quercifolia*)



How old is the plant?

< 5 years

These plants
tend to need
to be more
mature to
flower well.
Give them
more time.

5+ years

Did you cut
it back?

Yes

Oops!
You cut off
the flower
buds. Avoid
pruning.

No

Deer
damage
or low
light

Still have questions about
hydrangeas or other Proven
Winners ColorChoice Shrubs?
We're here to help you be
successful in the garden! Visit
[www.provenwinners.com/
feedback](http://www.provenwinners.com/feedback).

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FLOWERING SHRUBS



HYDRANGEAS DEMYSTIFIED

Which hydrangea do you grow?

There are six main types of hydrangeas commonly grown in North American gardens.

Hydrangea Fun Fact There are about 49 species of hydrangeas. Four species are native to North America, including smooth hydrangea and oakleaf hydrangea.

CITYLINE® Rio Hydrangea



Bigleaf

(also known as florist's hydrangea, hortensia, mophead, or lacecap)
Hydrangea macrophylla

- Hardy to USDA zone 5
- Bloom on old wood: do not prune, protect in winter

Proven Winners® varieties:
ABRACADABRA® series,
CITYLINE® series, EDGY® Hearts,
LET'S DANCE® series, PARAPLU®

BOBO® Hydrangea



Panicle

(also known as peegee hydrangea)
Hydrangea paniculata

- Hardy to USDA zone 3
- Bloom on new wood: prune in late winter/early spring

Proven Winners® varieties:
BOBO®, FIRE LIGHT®, 'Limelight',
LITTLE LIME®, 'Little Lamb',
PINKY WINKY®, QUICK FIRE®,
LITTLE QUICK FIRE®, ZINFIN DOLL™

INCREDIBALL® Hydrangea



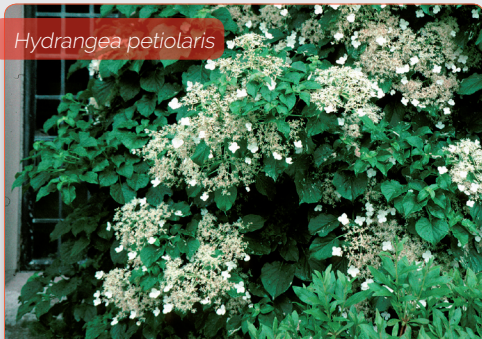
Smooth

(also known as Annabelle hydrangea)
Hydrangea arborescens

- Hardy to USDA zone 3
- Bloom on new wood: prune in late winter/early spring

Proven Winners® varieties:
INCREDIBALL® series,
INVINCIBELLE® Spirit series

Hydrangea petiolaris



Climbing

Hydrangea petiolaris

- Hardy to USDA zone 4
- Bloom on old wood: do not prune

TUFF STUFF™ Hydrangea



Mountain

Hydrangea serrata

- Hardy to USDA zone 5
- Bloom on old wood: do not prune

Proven Winners® varieties:
TUFF STUFF™ series

GATSBY MOON™ Hydrangea



Oakleaf

Hydrangea quercifolia

- Hardy to USDA zone 5
- Bloom on old wood: do not prune, protect in winter

Proven Winners® varieties:
GATSBY™ series

Color

All hydrangeas undergo some color change as their flowers age, but only bigleaf and mountain hydrangeas can change their color in a predictable, controllable way. It is not solely the pH of the soil that is responsible for this change – it is actually the presence of aluminum in the soil.

- Certain varieties of bigleaf hydrangeas cannot change color. The rich red blooms of CITYLINE® Paris hydrangea are a good example. Similarly, white varieties of bigleaf hydrangea will not change color.
- It is easier to change a hydrangea from pink to blue than from blue to pink, but both endeavors involve making chemical application in specific amounts at specific times. A soil test is necessary to determine the best course of action. If you decide to try to change the flower color, shop for products carefully and read all directions.
- Pennies, nails, aluminum foil, or coffee grounds in the soil will not change the color!

Tips for Success

- Moist but well-drained soil (hydrangeas will not tolerate wet feet – ever!)
- Some sun each day. Most people think of hydrangeas as shade plants, but they look and flower best with at least four hours of sun, ideally in the morning. Panicle hydrangeas are the most sun tolerant, and can take full sun in northern climates.
- Plenty of water, especially as they are getting established. Hydrangeas have shallow roots, so they dry out quickly. A two to three inch layer of shredded bark mulch is a useful addition to any hydrangea planting.

Hydrangea Fun Fact Hydrangeas are notoriously water-needy, but the "hydra" part of their name actually refers to the seed capsules' resemblance to ancient Greek water-carrying vessels.