USEFUL **TREE** TERMINOLOGY

branch bark ridge: raised strip of bark at intersection between trunk or parent stem

branch collar: the swollen area at the base of a branch

crown: the leaves and branches of a tree

dripline: line on the ground that traces the outermost edge of the tree's crown

central leader: one main stem that typically extends straight up from trunk

lateral branch: a shoot or stem growing from a parent branch

parent branch: a trunk, limb, or prominent branch from which shoots or stems grow

stub: an undesirable short length of a branch remaining after a break or incorrect pruning cut is made

TRUNK PROTECTION

Some young trees have thin bark that need protection during development. Mulch is a good way to keep grass and weeds away from trunks (and grass cutting equipment), but it doesn't always protect against animals. To prevent long-term damage, tree tubing can be used.

The tube should be large enough to allow 1-4 inches of space between it and the trunk. Wrap tube around trunk and use wire or string to keep tube closed. Push tube into ground or mulch less than an inch.

As the tree grows, the tube will need to be replaced or if deemed safe, completely removed.

STAKING YOUR YOUNG TREE

Some trees need to be staked so they can stand straight and tall. Staking should only take place if root ball is unstable or if the trunk is leaning.

STAKING TIPS

- If root ball is unstable, use 1-3 stakes attached low on the trunk.
- If trunk is leaning, use 1 stake attached at least 6 inches below first set of branches.
- Stakes should be placed about 15-18 inches out from the trunk
- Ties should never be tight on the tree
- Stakes are typically only needed for one growing season

VA DOF Tree Owner's Manual

Hiring an Arborist

HCAP Website

Go here for full guide

TREE OWNER'S GUIDE

Info from USDA, VA Dept. of Forestry, and VA Urban Forest Council

MULCHING

PROPER MULCHING CAN HAVE THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- Soil moisture retention
- Increased water infiltration
- Moderation of soil temperature, protecting roots from extreme summer and winter temperatures
- Elimination of potential tree damage from mowers and weedeaters
- Prevention of soil compaction by reducing foot and vehicle traffic
- Prevention of the growth of weeds and grass

THE PROPER MULCHING METHOD

- Use organic mulch due to its soil-enhancing qualities
- Apply a 2-4 inch layer of mulch in a 3-foot diameter circle around tree
- Do not apply mulch directly against tree
- As the tree gets older, the mulch should extend to its drip line
- Replenish the mulch as it decomposes

EXAMPLE OF CORRECT MULCH APPLICATION

WATERING

- If soil is dry, 2 gallons of water per inch of the trunk (diameter)
- For deep soaking use materials like a tree bag or 5-gallon bucket with small holes to slowly release water
- Begin checking soil moisture in the spring and continue watering throughout the summer and into fall (until freezing conditions)
- After the first 3 years, frequency and amount can vary based on weather conditions

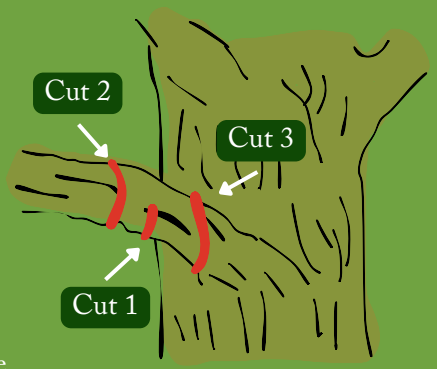
PRUNING

If pruning cannot be done with both feet on the ground or if power equipment is required... *hire a reliable arborist.*

PRUNER TYPE	EXAMPLE	USES	OTHER NOTES
ANVIL PRUNER		cutting through living stems, shaping young trees and removing growth close to main stem, smaller stems	more of a stem crushing tool, can damage living plant tissue
BY-PASS PRUNER		cutting through dead/coarse wood, general clearing where cut quality is less crtiical, smaller stems	works like scissors, clean cut, safe for living plant tissue
PRUNING SAW		removing wood about 2 inches in diameter, best for trees 2 years and older	can use on any kind of stem, some come with extensions for taller branches

THE TERNARY METHOD

1. First cut begins at the bottom of the branch 6-12 in from the branch union, only partially through the branch
2. Second cut is made above or just outside the first, all the way through branch
3. Third cut just outside of the branch bark ridge and branch collar

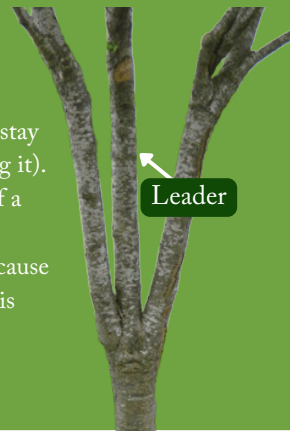


★ Used for branches about 2 inches in diameter. ★

Use a pruning saw to complete the ternary method of pruning. Smaller branches may be pruned using either the anvil pruner or by-pass pruner, refer to the table above for uses of both.

GOALS WHEN PRUNING YOUNG TREES

1. To have branches with a branch bark ridge, an indicator that branches are well attached to trunk.
2. To have one central leader, choose one leader to keep and prune the competitors.
3. To have good spacing between branches, typically 12 inches for small trees and 18 inches for large trees.
4. To have good crown height.

OTHER PRUNING NOTES

- Support branch with one hand and stay close to trunk collar (without cutting it).
- Do NOT remove more than 25% of a tree's live branches at one time.
- Winter is the best time to prune because branches are easier to see and there is minimal stress to the tree.