

# Tree Pruning

Tree Pruning is one of our most common requests.

There is a host of reasons to prune a tree, some of which are similar to our tree removal reasons. The first decision to be made, when considering pruning, is whether cutting off and removing living branches will actually benefit the tree or shrub. Will the proposed pruning prolong its useful life expectancy within the context of the surrounding environment and land use. It is important to remember that pruning may do more harm than good, and in some situations may create more problems than it solves.

Here are some reasons to consider pruning:

- Prune to remove dead or damaged branches
- Prune to improve the shape of the canopy
- Prune to remove boughs over or towards buildings
- Prune to gain light in house and garden
- Prune to reduce sail effect of canopy during the stormy seasons
- Prune to clear power lines
- Pruning near pools to reduce leaf drop
- Pruning to assist the tree to grow without branches rubbing against each other

It is essential when considering pruning a tree, of any age, that a thorough evaluation is done to determine the objectives to be achieved.

Professional decisions can then be made as to where, how, when and how often to prune a specific tree or trees, to achieve specific objectives. This evaluation process is, an essential, part of our Planning Management Process.

All pruning that is undertaken by Matt The Tree Fella, complies with Australian Standards 4373 for The Pruning of Amenities Trees, which are practises and procedures designed to minimise the impact pruning has on trees. This includes climbing the tree without spikes so as to not create additional injury and making a cut called a "collar cut" which maximises the healing potential for each chainsaw cut made.

## Garden Pruning

Pruning plants regularly helps them stay healthy and reach their full growing potential. Lopping off branches, twigs and roots is a necessary part of maintaining a flourishing garden. Not every young tree or shrub requires shaping, but it's useful...

• where branches cross or rub, causing wounds that can form entry points for disease.

• where a tree or shrub has acute crotch angles - they tend to split.

• to remove low-hanging branches.

• to open up dense shrubs, such as roses, to allow light and air into the centre of the plant. This discourages fungal infections and promotes repeat flowering.

• to create windows in mature tree canopies to admit light below.

• for aesthetics, to train an azalea to look like a small tree, or accentuate trunks of crepe myrtles, rhododendrons or camellias.

Many shrubs grow foliage so dense that flowering suffers, particularly remontant (repeat-blooming) roses.

Other remontant shrubs, such as buddleia, flower more when old branches are headed back. Thinning branches from forsythia, hydrangea, lilac and mahonia improves flowering. Up to a third of a shrub's branches can be removed each year without affecting its health. Reviving older plants Old age is relative for plants. Roses flower best on new growth, while buddleia grows back best from a 30 to 60cm-tall stump. Red-osier dogwood shows best colour at one or two years - cutting out old stems is the best way to keep new growth developing.

Branches on big old shrubs that need large-scale renewal should be thinned out gradually over two or three years.

Pruning eliminates hiding places for pests and diseases. Remove limbs or branches riddled with holes, oozing sap or surrounded by the sawdust from boring caterpillars.