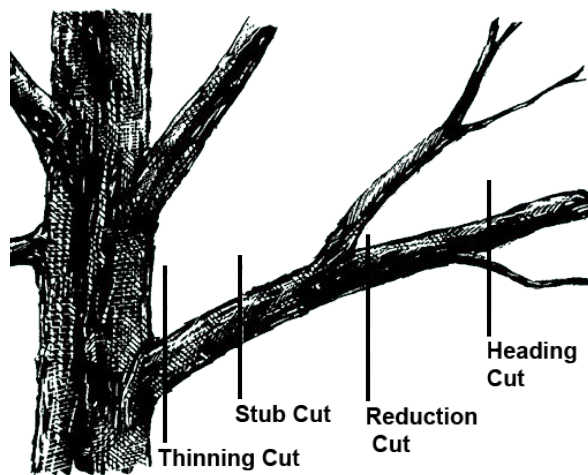


Pruning Trees & Shrubs

REASONS TO PRUNE TREES & SHRUBS

- Remove Unstructured & Poor Growth
 - Codominant leaders (2 or more trunks)
 - Weak branch unions
 - Weak but aggressive growth (water sprouts & suckers)
 - Rubbing or crossing branches
 - Girdling roots
- Remove Existing Tree Damage
 - Storm damage
 - Infections and infestations
 - Dying or dead material
- Encouraging New Growth



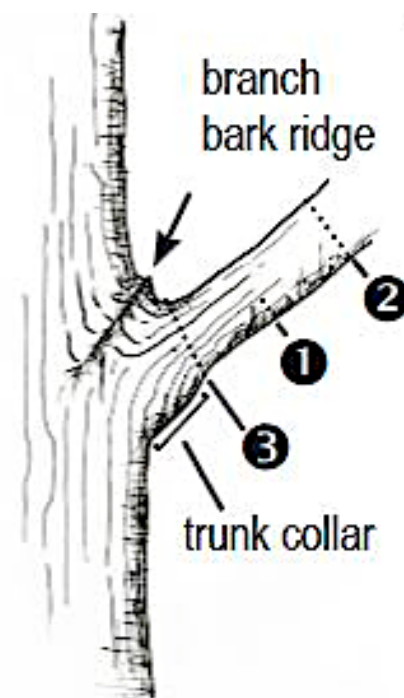
PRUNING CUTS

- **Thinning Cuts** (good) – cuts branch back to the trunk
- **Reduction Cuts** (good) – cuts branch back to another major branch
- **Heading Cuts** (bad) – removes leader without considering other growth (“topping”)
- **Stub Cuts** (bad) – removes branch without considering other growth

3-STEP PRUNING METHOD

Ideal for large or load-bearing branches.

1. **Undercut** – small incision under the branch prevents bark from tearing (1)
2. **Overcut** – removes the majority of the branch to reduce weight; may tear back to the undercut (2)
3. **Final Cut** – Cut at 45° angles for ideal wound healing (3)



ENCOURAGE HEALING

- Prune at the right time (late winter/early spring)
- Use the right tool for the job
- Keep tools sharp & clean
- Avoid flush cuts, topping leaders and branch stubs
- Skip tree paint or sealant

CLASS NOTES

LEARN MORE WITH THESE EXTENSION RESOURCES

- ❖ Ramsey County Master Gardeners www.ramseymastergardeners.org
- ❖ University of MN Extension Program www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden