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**GENERAL CERTIFICATE IN ORNAMENTAL
HORTICULTURE LEVEL 1**

Workbook :

Prune and Shape Ornamental Shrubs

**Prune and Shape Ornamental Shrubs
Learner Workbook**

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Workbook :

Prune and Shape Ornamental Shrubs

A c k n o w l e d g e m e n t s

Developed by

Lifestyle College

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Study Session Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this study session is to equip you with the skills and knowledge necessary to prune and shape various plants, shrubs and hedges.

This study session forms part of the General Certificate in Horticulture, NQF level 1 and is aligned with the Unit Standard: Prune and shape ornamental shrubs, which carries 4 credits.

Who is it for?

This study session and unit standard form the knowledge base for people working with plants within the ornamental horticulture or landscaping industry and gives the learner the skills and knowledge necessary to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the effects of pruning and the reasons why this should be conducted.
- Select the appropriate tools for various pruning procedures.
- Maintain pruning tools.
- Make the correct pruning cuts for various plants and shrubs.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of hedge pruning.

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What's in it for you?

The skills acquired in this study session will equip you with the skills and knowledge needed to be prune and shape various plants, shrubs and hedges. These skills and knowledge form the basis of your horticultural studies and help you to:

- Describe the consequences of pruning, deliberate or incidental.
- Describe the conditions that necessitate pruning.
- Explain the role that pruning plays in the promotion of new growth and flowers.
- Explain the selection of the pruning tools most suitable for deadheading and the removal of small stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- Explain the selection of the pruning tools most suitable for cutting branches and hard stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- Describe the factors that should be considered when rejecting pruning tools.
- Demonstrate the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.
- Demonstrate the correct storage and protection of the tool's cutting blades.
- Explain the importance of selecting the correct time of year for pruning.
- Demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.
- Indicate the positions where the pruning cut should be made.
- Demonstrate the slope of the pruning cut, relative to the selected bud.
- Describe the types of plant material, suitable for clipped or formal hedging.
- Demonstrate the method and form to which a hedge should be clipped.

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What about assessment?

If you can:

- Select the pruning tools most suitable for deadheading and the removal of small stems.
- Indicate the position where the pruning cut should be made.
- Make a straight cut.
- Make a slanted cut.
- Demonstrate the method and form to which a hedge should be clipped.
- Demonstrate the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.
- Demonstrate the correct storage and protection of your pruning tool's cutting blades.
- Answer all the knowledge questions in the summative assessment.

You will receive credits for a competent rating on your assessments.

These credits contribute 1 unit standard and 4 credits towards the General Certificate in Ornamental Horticulture, at NQF Level 1.

The laid down policies and procedures with regard to assessment, moderation, RPL and appeals govern this assessment.

You will be rated "Competent" or "Not Yet Competent" against the assessment criteria.

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Unit Standard

Title	Prune and shape ornamental shrubs
Number	119710
Level	1
Credits	4
Field	Agriculture and Nature Conservation
Sub field	Horticulture
Issue date	2006-02-09
Learning assumed to be in place	Demonstrate knowledge of communication and Numeracy at Abet level 3.

Specific Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the effects of pruning and the reasons why this should be conducted.	1.1. Describe the consequences of pruning, deliberate and incidental. 1.2. Describe the conditions that necessitate pruning. 1.3. Explain the role that pruning plays in the promotion of new growth and flowers.
2. Select the appropriate tools for various pruning procedures.	2.1. Explain the selection of the pruning tools most suitable for deadheading and the removal of small stems and the reasons for selecting these tools. 2.2. Explain the selection of pruning tools most suitable for cutting branches and hard stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.

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Specific Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
3. Maintain pruning tools.	<p>3.1. Describe the factors that should be considered when rejecting pruning tools.</p> <p>3.2. Demonstrate the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.</p> <p>3.3. Demonstrate the correct storage and protection of the tool's cutting blades.</p>
4. Make the correct pruning cuts for various plants and shrubs.	<p>4.1. Explain the importance of selecting the correct time of year for pruning.</p> <p>4.2. Demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.</p> <p>4.3. Indicate the positions where the pruning cut should be made.</p> <p>4.4. Demonstrate the slope of the pruning cut.</p>
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of hedge pruning.	<p>5.1. Describe the types of plant materials, suitable for clipped or formal hedging.</p> <p>5.2. Demonstrate the method and form, to which a hedge should be clipped.</p>

Embedded Knowledge

Embedded knowledge is reflected within the assessment criteria of each specific outcome and must be assessed in its own right, through oral and written evidence. Observation cannot be the only assessment.

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Critical Cross Field Outcomes

- Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made – specific outcome 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6.
- Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation or community. Specific outcome embedded in the learning for this level of learner.
- Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively. Specific outcome 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information. Specific outcome 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation. Specific outcome embedded in the learning for this level of learner.
- Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility toward the environment and health of others. Specific outcome 1 and 2.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation. Specific outcome 1, 4 and 6.

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**Unit Standard Accreditation and Moderation
Options**

1. Internal moderation.
2. External moderation.
3. Moderation of assessment will be overseen by the relevant ETQA, according to the moderation guidelines in the relevant qualification the agreed ETQA procedures.
4. Internal assessment.
5. External assessment with the relevant registered/accredited industry body/ETQA.
6. An Assessor accredited by the relevant ETQA, will assess the Learner's competency.
7. Formative and summative assessment of qualifying Learners against this unit standard should be in alignment with the requirements of the NSB.
8. Practical assessment activities will be used that are appropriate to the contents in which the qualifying Learners are working.
9. Assessment will include self and peer assessment, practical and oral assessment, observations, questions and answers, etc.
10. Direct observation is required in simulated or actual work conditions.
11. Reporting skills are demonstrated by effective communication, using verbal and/or writing skills.
12. Assessment is to be structured to include formative and summative component, as well as the submission of a Portfolio of Evidence.
13. The assessment should ensure that all the specific outcomes, critical cross field outcomes and embedded knowledge are assessed.
14. Specific outcomes must be assessed in their own right, through oral and practical evidence and cannot be assessed by observation only.

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Essential embedded knowledge must be assessed in their own right, through oral and practical evidence and cannot be assessed by observation only.

15. Special outcomes and essential embedded knowledge must be assessed in relation to each other.

16. If qualifying Learners are able to explain the essential embedded knowledge, but are unable to perform the specific outcomes, then they should not be assessed as competent.

17. If qualifying Learners are able to perform specific outcomes, but are unable to explain the essential embedded knowledge, they should not be assessed as competent.

18. Evidence of the specified critical cross-field outcomes should be found, both in performance and in essential embedded knowledge.

19. Assessment activities must be fair, so that all Learners have equal opportunities. Activities must be free of gender, ethnic or other bias.

20. This unit standard can be assessed together with any other relevant registered unit standard.

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Who does what?

You are expected to actively take part in the lessons by:

- Asking questions.
- Planning and preparing for your training and assessment.
- Completing the assessment tasks that you are given.
- Telling your trainer when you need help or don't understand.

Your learning will be supported in the following ways:

- Your trainer will provide you with all the necessary training material.
- Your trainer will manage the learning process during the training.
- The assessor will plan and prepare you for assessment, assess your competence and provide feedback to you and arrange any follow up assessments that may be necessary.

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Lesson 1 : Pruning

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Demonstrate an understanding of the effects of pruning and the reasons why this should be conducted.

After you have worked through Lesson 1, you should be able to:

- Describe the consequences of pruning, deliberate or incidental.
- Describe the conditions that necessitate pruning.
- Explain the role that pruning plays in the promotion of new growth and flowers.

What is Pruning?

There are two kinds of pruning that you can do:

- Corrective pruning which is the cutting away or trimming of dead, diseased and unwanted stems, shoots or flowers.
- Decorative pruning which is the cutting away or trimming of plants stems, twigs, shoots and leaves to help the plant grow into beautiful shapes.

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Nature gets rid of everything that is no longer useful and in the garden you can help nature by removing all the dead wood, diseased or broken growth on your plants. Careful thinning of over-crowded growth of your plants, allows more light and air to reach your plant by removing any weak or crowded stems and shoots found on your plants.

As you can see plants can be pruned deliberately by you or plants can sometimes be pruned by:

- Animals eating the leaves, stems or twigs of plants.
- Elephants walking past or breaking off branches to get to the fruit of a tree.
- Storm damage where lightning or wind breaks off a branch or stem.
- People or children breaking the plant by mistake.
- Vehicles crashing into plants and breaking them.

Pruning of your plants, helps your plants to thrive and flourish, so let's take a look at why you should prune your plants.

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Why should you prune your plants?

<p>Pruning encourages your plants to produce new leaves and stems.</p>	<p>By thinning out the stems of your plants, more light can get into your plant and this encourages strong growth in the stems that remain on your plants. Pruning also encourages plenty of bushy new growth, because each stem pruned will produce several new stems in place of the one that was removed.</p>
<p>Pruning encourages your plants to produce more flowers and fruit.</p>	<p>Since more stems are produced from pruning, more flowers will be formed as there are more shoots for flowers to grow on and on more flowers on fruit trees means that your fruit tree will bear more fruit.</p>
<p>Pruning encourages healthy new root development.</p>	<p>Pruning of your plant's roots helps to make up for the loss of foliage when you are transplanting your plants and encourages your plants to make new roots.</p>

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 1
List the reasons why you should prune your plants.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 2
Explain how pruning encourages new growth and flowers.

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Now that you understand the benefits of pruning your plants, let's take a look at when you would need to prune your plants.

When do you need to prune your plants?	
You need to prune any dead parts of your plants.	<p>Prune to remove any dead parts of your plants because this helps your plant to get rid of branches or stems broken by wind, hail, rain or pests and encourages your plant to produce new, strong healthy growth.</p> <p>After your flowers have finished flowering, the flower heads also need to be pruned and this will encourage your plants to produce new flowers.</p>
You need to prune any diseased parts of your plant.	<p>Prune to get rid of any diseased parts of your plants and to stop the disease from spreading to other parts of your plant or to other plants growing in the area.</p> <p>You can also prune your plants to allow your spray mixture to reach all parts of your plants, especially the inside stems and leaves.</p>

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When do you need to prune your plants?	
	<p>Getting rid of the diseased parts of your plants will open up your plant and this opening up will give your plant good air circulation and more light which will help your plant to recover from the disease.</p>
<p>Prune to shape your plants.</p>	<p>Most plants will need regular pruning as they are growing, to achieve a well balanced shape and look good.</p> <p>Sometimes one section of a plant grows more quickly than the other sections of the plant, when this happens lightly prune the strong shoots that are growing quickly and hard prune the weaker shoots that are growing more slowly because hard pruning will encourage strong growth.</p> <p>Removing parts of a plant, (“thinning” the plant), will allow for a better balance to be created in the plant</p>
<p>To control the size of your plants.</p>	<p>As some plants grow in the landscaped area, they grow to block a view or a pathway or even grow into other plants. Pruning of your plants helps to limit their size.</p>
<p>Before you transplant any of your plants.</p>	<p>Prune back your plant’s foliage to help make up for</p>

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When do you need to prune your plants?	
	the loss of roots when you are transplanting your plants. This helps your plants to be successfully transplanted.
To stop rootstock from shooting on grafted and budded plants such as roses and fruit trees.	Rootstock shoots/suckers are often more vigorous than grafted or budded stock and will take over if it is not removed. Prune these stems back flush with the stem or stems from which they are growing.
To stop variegated leaves from going back to their original green colour.	Certain variegated plants keep trying to go back to their original green foliage. Prune these stems back flush with the stem or stems from which they are growing.
To create beautiful looking shapes in your landscaped area.	<p>You can create art forms out of your plants by pruning your plants into a ball or even animal shapes, this is called topiary.</p> <p>You can also prune plants to create hedges.</p> <p>Training of young shrubs into standards will require pruning in its initial stages to create a leader shoot.</p>

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 3
Walk around outside and see if you can find any plants that need pruning and then give reasons why you think these plants should be pruned.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 4
When would you need to prune a plant?

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can describe the consequences of pruning deliberate or incidental.
- I can describe the conditions that necessitate pruning.
- I can explain the role that pruning plays in the promotion of new growth and flowers.

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Lesson 2 : Tools for Pruning

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Select the appropriate tools for various pruning procedures.

Maintain pruning tools.

After you have worked through Lesson 2, you should be able to:

- Explain the selection of the pruning tools most suitable for deadheading and the removal of small stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- Explain the selection of the pruning tools most suitable for cutting branches and hard stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- Describe the factors that should be considered when rejecting pruning tools.

Introduction

Although pruning is the cutting away of any unwanted part of the plant, you need to use special tools for the job because some tools can cause bruising and ragged cuts on the plant stem and it through these ragged cuts that diseases and pests can enter and cause damage and even death to your plants.

Let's take a look at the different types of pruning tools that you can use.

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Pruning Tools

Tool	Use	Description
Secateurs or Pruning Shears	<p>To prune a wide range of small plants stems like those of rose bushes which are up to 15 mm in thickness depending on the hardness of the plant's stem, for example if the stem of your plant is very hard, you will need to use a lopper or if the stem of your plant is very soft you may be able to cut thicker stems.</p> <p>To deadhead flowers that have finished flowering.</p>	<p>Secateurs are quick and easy to use. They come in different sizes, shapes and colour, for example some secateurs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have plastic coated, contoured hand grips and spring loaded handles for easy grip and use.• Are made for right handed people, others are made for left handed people. <p>Their blades are usually high quality steel and attached to a swivel section.</p> <p>Bypass secateurs This type of secateur has two curved blades that cut in a scissor-action where one blade passes the other.</p> <p>Anvil secateurs This type of secateur has one blade that cuts down against a bar of softer metal.</p>

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Tool	Use	Description
Pruning knife	<p>To prune a wide range of small plant stems, like rose bushes which are up to 15 mm in thickness, depending on the hardness of the plant's stem, for example if the stem of your plant is very hard, you will need to use a lopper or if the stem of your plant is very soft you may be able to cut thicker stems.</p> <p>To dead head spent flower heads.</p>	<p>Pruning knives rely on the sharpness of the blade to make a very clean cut, with the stem of the plant being hooked by the knife while the cut is made.</p> <p>Pruning knives are mostly used by experienced pruners and are not often used by home gardeners.</p> <p>The pruning knife blade can be either straight or curved and they come in many different sizes, with some pruning knives having blades that fold back into the handle.</p>
Loppers	<p>Depending on the size of the lopper, they can be used to prune plant stems ranging from 25 mm up to 40 mm thick without having to use a saw.</p>	<p>Loppers are just oversized secateurs with longer handles and they come in many different sizes. Their long handles allow for good leverage and they easily and cleanly cut the stems of plants.</p>

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Tool	Use	Description
	<p>Again this will depend on the hardness of the plant's stem, for example if the stem of your plant is very hard, you will need to use a saw or if the stem of your plant is very soft you may be able to cut thicker stems.</p>	<p>Loppers are also available in bypass or anvil types.</p> <p>Tree loppers are also available. These are often attached to a long pole and have rope pulleys that you pull on to create the cutting action.</p>
Hedge shears	<p>Hedge shears are good for trimming hedges and other plants that have plant stems thinner than the thickness of a pencil.</p> <p>Some hedge shears have a notch at the base of the blade that allows for the cutting of slightly thicker stems.</p>	<p>Hedge shears have high-quality steel blades which work in a scissor action and come in many different styles. Try and choose a tool that is light and comfortable to work with.</p> <p>The hand grips on the handles of the hedge shears are often covered with rubber which helps to ease the jolting action on the wrists that results from the repeated cutting action when opening and closing the blade (i.e. when using them).</p>

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Tool	Use	Description
	If the stems of your hedge are very hard you might need to use a powered hedge shears.	Powered hedge clippers Powered hedge clippers are either battery rechargeable or electric powered and often have blades on both sides.
Pruning Saws and Bows	<p>Pruning saws are used to prune large plants stems up to 50 mm thick. depending on the hardness of the plant's stem, for example if the stem of your plant is very hard, you will need to use a bow saw or if the stem of your plant is very soft you may be able to cut thicker stems.</p> <p>Bow saws can prune plant stems larger than 75 mm, depending on the hardness of the</p>	<p>Pruning saws are available in different sizes and styles. Some saws can be used in the narrow spaces and angles between plant stems.</p> <p>Folding saw</p> <p>These saws when they are unfolded are usually about 40 cm or longer. They are easy to carry and the teeth of the blade cut on both the push and pull strokes.</p> <p>Saws with curved blades</p> <p>These saws cut on the pull stroke and their tapered and pointed blade allows them to cut in narrow spaces. These are widely used and often called Grecian saws.</p>

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Tool	Use	Description
	plant's stem, for example if the stem of your plant is very hard, you will need to use a motorized saw or if the stem of your plant is very soft you may be able to cut thicker stems.	<p>Saws with straight blades</p> <p>Depending on the size of the saw, these saws can easily cut stems bigger than 75 mm. The blades often have teeth on both sides of the saw and so you need to be careful not to cut other stems on your plants with the teeth on the opposite side of the saw.</p> <p>Bow saws</p> <p>These saws have blades that are tensioned and can vary in length from 30 to 90 cm.</p>
Gloves	All types of pruning.	When pruning it is always a good idea to wear gloves, especially when pruning thorny shrubs. Some gloves have long cuffs that will also protect your arms.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 5

Look at the pruning tools in front of you, which of these tools would you use if you were deadheading or removing small plant stems?

Give reasons why you would choose these tools.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 6

Look at the pruning tools in front of you, which of these tools would you use if you were cutting branches and hard plant stems?

Give reasons why you would choose these tools.

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Choosing your tools

Always choose a pruning tool that is sharp and can easily cut through the size and the thickness of the stems, shoots, flowers or leaves that you want to prune. Don't try to cut through stems that are too thick or hard for the tool because this will strain your pruning tools and cause bruising and ragged cuts on your plants, especially when the tool is being twisted and forced to cut. Remember it is through these ragged cuts that pests and diseases can enter your plants and cause damage.

Always check that the pruning tools you are using:

- Are clean and have been sterilized with alcohol or spirits because diseases can be spread from one plant to another plant during pruning.
- Are rust free because rust can damage the blades of your tools and damaged tools can cause injury to yourself or others.
- Have no broken parts and that fittings and protective covers are tightly attached, so that you do not cause an injury to yourself or others.
- Have no chipped blades which can cause an injury to yourself or others.
- Have no unsafe mechanisms on the tools which can cause an injury to yourself or others.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 7
When would you not use these tools?

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can explain the selection of pruning tools most suitable for deadheading and the removal of small stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- I can explain the selection of pruning tools most suitable for cutting branches and hard stems and the reasons for selecting these tools.
- I can describe the factors that should be considered when rejecting pruning tools.

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Lesson 3 : Pruning Cuts

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Make the correct pruning cuts for various plants and shrubs.

After you have worked through Lesson 3, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of selecting the correct time of year for pruning.
- Demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.
- Indicate the positions where the pruning cut should be made.
- Demonstrate the slope of the pruning cut, relative to the selected bud.

Introduction

Although pruning is the cutting away of any unwanted part of the plant, you can't just cut anywhere on the plant as this can cause your plants to die back. To know how to prune so that your plants will thrive and flourish, you need to understand how your plants grow.

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How plants grow

Plants have terminal/apical buds at the tip of their stems and when you prune these away, the lateral (side) buds along the stems, below the cut, will begin to grow and the plant will lose its apical dominance. Apical dominance means that the bud at the end of the stem gets most of the plant's food supplies to encourage its strong growth but once you have pruned this bud, the plant's food supply is then sent to the lateral buds which now start to grow.

You can decide which way you want the new shoot to grow by looking at the direction in which the bud is growing/pointing. Prune the bud which is pointing in the direction that you want the new stem to grow, because the new stem will grow in the direction that the bud is pointing.

If you cut away a big piece of your plant's growth, your plants will make up for this loss by producing lots of new growth. If you only trim back a small part of your plant, your plants will produce a little new grow to make up for this loss. But, different plants will respond to pruning in different ways, many plants, like roses can suffer dieback after pruning if the cut is not carried out sharply and correctly and so you need to know a little about the plant you are pruning to make sure that you are pruning it properly.

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When is the right time to prune?

The correct season to prune is from late winter to early spring through to summer depending on the type of plant being pruned.

Deciduous plants are best pruned during the late autumn and winter – just before the growing season

Evergreen plants are best pruned just before spring growth starts.

It is better to prune before or at the beginning of the growing season of the plant because when the plant becomes dormant, it will not produce new growth. For example, summer flowering shrubs should not be pruned close to the winter months when the plant will become dormant because any new shoots that do grow will be damaged by cold weather.

Light pruning can also be done during the growing season especially if you are dead heading, doing corrective pruning or decorative pruning and clipping.

Corrective pruning of any kind is best done during the plant's growing season.

Palms can be pruned at any time of the year because only the dead, diseased or damaged leaves are removed. If you cut off the top of the stem of a palm at any height the plant will not continue to grow.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 8
Explain why it is important to choose the correct time of year to prune.

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Types of Pruning Cuts

The straight cut

There are two main ways to use the straight cut:

- To remove an entire branch or
- To cut above a pair of buds on a plant that has opposite buds.

Let's take a look at both these ways in more detail.

Removing an entire branch

If you are pruning a stem at the point it joins a larger stem, you need to make a clean cut by cutting the stem off as flush as possible so that no stump remains.

If you are cutting the stem with secateurs remember to hold the flat side of the secateurs against the stem and not the rounded side.

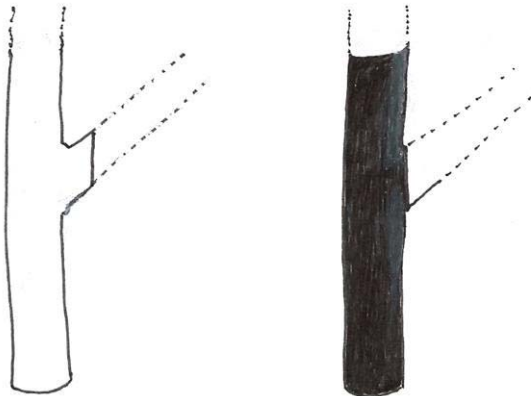
Try to cut the stem off just outside the stem collar, which is the slightly swollen area at the base of the stem where the stem joins the main stem because this collar serves as the plants natural defense against infection. The plant wound will also be smaller beyond the collar.

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The basic rule of pruning is not to leave stubs (often referred to as “coat hangers”), on the plant because this allows diseases and insects to invade your plant.



Straight cut for removing entire stems

Picture A. Incorrect method of leaving a “coat hanger”

Picture B. Correct cut just beyond the collar and almost flush with the stem

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Pruning above opposite buds

The other use of the straight cut is to prune plants that have opposite buds.

Choose healthy, strong buds and cut back above a pair of buds.



Straight cut for pruning opposite buds

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 9
Carry out a straight cut on the plant you have been given.

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The slanted cut

As you have seen, when you prune you need to cut back to a bud. Select a healthy, strong outward facing bud or a bud that faces in the direction that you want the shoot to grow in.

Cut about 8 mm above the bud at a slant of 45 degrees. The cut should not slope towards the bud, but away from the bud, especially where the stem is upright and the cut should be clean.



Slanted cut used in pruning plants with alternate buds

Picture A. The correct cut, where the bottom of the cut is in line with the bud

Picture B. Incorrect cut – cut too close to the bud – it may damage the bud

Picture C. Incorrect cut – cut ragged i.e. not a clean cut

Picture D. Incorrect cut – the slant is angled in the wrong direction i.e.

because the water will run off the cut and onto the bud

Picture E. Incorrect cut – cut is too far from the bud, the stub will die back and encourage disease to enter

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Position to prune plants with alternate buds

Where the buds on the stems are alternate sides, select a bud (normally an outward facing bud) and slant the cut above the bud using the slanted cut.

The 45 degree slope of the cut will allow water to run off the cut and stop water from collecting on the cut which could help disease to enter your plant.

Remember, the slope of the cut will also face away from the bud and be almost level to 3.5 mm above the bud at the base of the cut and about 8 mm above the bud at the top of the cut.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 10
Carry out a slanted cut on the plant you have been given and then show your lecturer the position where the pruning cut should be made.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 11
Explain how the pruning cut should slope, in relation to the selected bud.

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can explain the importance of selecting the correct time of year for pruning.
- I can demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.
- I can indicate the position where the pruning cut should be made.
- I can demonstrate the slope of the pruning cut, relative to the selected bud.

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Lesson 4 : Pruning Hedges

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of hedge pruning.

After you have worked through Lesson 4, you should be able to:

- Describe the types of plant material, suitable for clipped or formal hedging.
- Demonstrate the method and form, to which a hedge should be clipped.

Introduction

There are two styles of hedges; formal and informal.

- **Formal hedges** need regular trimming or clipping to keep them in shape.
- **Informal hedges** are far looser and only need to be pruned now and again to stop them from becoming overgrown with long straggly shoots. Informal hedges are not as neat as formal hedges but can look very attractive especially when they are flowering or bearing fruit, like berries.

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The style of hedge you choose will depend on their purpose.

- Small formal hedges are often used decoratively to accentuate and frame an area.
- Larger formal hedges are often used as boundaries for screening and even protection (especially where plants with thorns are used).
- Informal hedges are also used as a divisions or screening ability in a garden but are used in a more natural landscaped setting and are often selected for the beauty of their flowers or fruit.

The width of the hedge is normally kept as narrow as the particular plant's growth will allow without wasting space in the garden.

Effective hedging that has well knitted, dense growth relies on a sufficient framework of stems to make it look full, so as with height the type of plant and its branching habits will determine how narrow or wide you will be able to make the hedge (normally this is between half to just over three quarters the natural mature width of the plant).

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Clipped or formal hedge plants

Hedges can be made from both evergreen and deciduous plants, but whatever plant you choose to grow and prune into a hedge, make sure that the plants:

- Have a long lifespan.
- Are hardy and can survive in the coldest temperatures for the region. If plants are damaged by cold temperatures, it will be difficult to keep the hedge at a uniform shape and size.
- Respond well to pruning, by shooting in great amounts from below the cut stems and twigs to form bushy growth.
- You choose can grow as high as you want them to grow. Formal hedges can vary in size, the smallest being as small as about 10 cm high to large hedges of 3 metres or more, depending on their purpose. The type of plant and its mature height will determine the range of heights that the hedge can be pruned to with good effect i.e. not so tall that the hedge looks sparse and not too short, where the hedge is very woody (mainly consisting of large thick stems). Each type of plant will have a range of heights that will best suit their growth habit and this is normally from about half of their mature height upwards to almost the full mature height, depending on their branching habit.

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Some examples of formal hedge plants

Plant	Deciduous or Evergreen	Size of hedge: Small = up to 1m Medium = 1m to 2m Tall = taller than 2m
Lavandula	Evergreen	Small
Escallonia	Evergreen	Small to medium
Myrtus communis	Evergreen	Small to medium
Buxus	Evergreen	Small to medium
Duranta	Evergreen	Small to medium
Abelia grandiflora	Evergreen	medium
Prunus laurocerasus	Evergreen	medium
Eleagnus	Evergreen	medium
Dodonaea viscosa	Evergreen	Tall
Photinea glabra	Evergreen	Tall
Syzigium paniculata	Evergreen	Tall
Camellia japonica	Evergreen	Tall
Camellia sasanqua	Evergreen	Tall
Cupressocyparis leylandii	Evergreen	Tall
Berberis	Deciduous	Small
Spirea floribunda	Deciduous	Small to medium
Ligustrum	Deciduous	Medium to tall

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 12
Describe the types of plant material that are suitable for clipped or formal hedging.

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Pruning tools for hedges

The most commonly used pruning tools for pruning formal hedges are hedge shears, electric hedge shears and secateurs.

Although pruning a formal hedge with a secateur takes a long time, secateurs are the best pruning tool to use if you are pruning a hedge with large leaves like the *Prunus laurocerasus*, because the cut leaves will spoil the overall effect of the hedge while the secateur trims the stems/twigs and does not cut the leaves.

Pruning Hedges

Most hedges have a squared-off shape and are cut to have vertical sides and a flat top. To get the best from your hedge you should cut it in the shape of a wedge, with the bottom of your hedged being wider than the top of your hedge and with the sides of your hedge gently tapering towards the top. This shape will allow for maximum light to reach all parts of your hedge.

Often hedges become top-heavy in their wedge shape starts at the top, with the bottom of the hedge being narrower. If you have a hedge this shape you will need to correct the shape of the hedge to allow enough light into the base area of the hedge which over time will become sparsely branched or even bare. By correcting the shape of your hedge you will also prevent your hedge from being damaged by wind and storms.

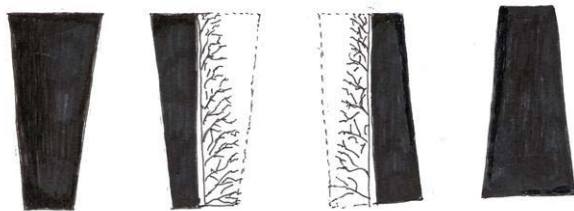
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Tilt the blade of your shears towards the hedge so that it is easy to keep the hedge shape tapered.

Start pruning from the bottom of the hedge and prune the hedge to the width you want. Prune upwards, making sure as you go along that you are forming a wedge shape.



Picture A. This is the wrong shape for a hedge. Light and air movement are restricted and the bottom of the hedge will become bare

Picture B. Start to rejuvenate the hedge by pruning one side only, to the correct shape

Picture C. Prune the other side once the other side has recovered (normally a season later).

Picture D. the correct shape of a hedge

To rejuvenate or correct the shape of your hedge cut back one side of your hedge to the correct shape, wait for it to recover for one or sometimes even two seasons and then prune the other side in the same way.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 13
Clip a hedge should be clipped.

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can describe the types of material, suitable for clipped or formal hedging.
- I can demonstrate the method and form, to which a hedge should be clipped.

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Lesson 5 : Pruning Shrubs

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Make the correct pruning cuts for various plants and shrubs.

After you have worked through Lesson 5, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.

**Pruning of deciduous shrubs that flower from
late winter to early spring.**

Some shrubs as they mature start to produce fewer flowers and become very dense. If the shrub produces its flowers on previous season's wood/growth i.e. not the new spring growth as most shrubs do, then the shrub should be pruned and rejuvenated directly after flowering. The shrub will respond with new growth that will flower next year.

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Example of shrubs that flower on last year's wood are:

- Deutzia
- Philadelphus
- Spirea
- Weigelia.

To prune these shrubs remove:

- Any diseased, dead, crossing, damaged stems or suckers (shoots coming up from the root stock)
- Remove any weak growth

And then stand back and by looking at the plant decide which stems should be removed or shortened in order to encourage a well-balanced framework for the plant.

- Cut or shorten some of the oldest stems by about one third and shorten shoots that have flowered to 2 to 3 buds from a side stem.
- If the shrub is still too dense, thin out the weakest of the new shoots and only leave stems that are at least a pencil thick.

Remember

Always cut just above a vigorous side stem or strong, healthy bud facing in the correct direction, or healthy pair of buds. Don't forget to make accurate, clean cuts with sharp equipment and seal the wounds with a wound sealant.

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**Pruning deciduous shrubs that flower from the
middle of spring to autumn**

The rose is a good example of deciduous shrubs that flower from the middle of spring to autumn, however not all shrubs that flower on new wood need to be pruned every year. Some will only require rejuvenation every three to four years. Therefore, remember that pruning must have a purpose.

When pruning these shrubs:

- Remove any diseased, dead, crossing or damaged stems.
- Remove any weak growth.

Stand back and looking at your plant, decide which stems should be removed or shortened in order to encourage a well-balanced framework for the plant. In this case you want to produce a low framework of main stems, from which shoots will grow and produce flowers.

- Cut back the strong previous seasons stems left on the plant to about a third of their size. Cut back to a strong bud (– often about 3 buds from the base).
- In the case of rose pruning, in order to allow light into the middle of the plant try to create a vase shape as a guideline to shaping the framework stems i.e. don't encourage new shoots to face inwards.

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Remember

Always cut just above a vigorous side stem or strong, healthy bud facing in the correct direction, or healthy pair of buds. Don't forget to make accurate, clean cuts with sharp equipment and seal the wounds with a wound sealant.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 14
Prune deciduous shrubs.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 15

Explain the differences between pruning:

- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from late winter to early spring.**
- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from middle spring to autumn.**

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Pruning evergreen shrubs

Most evergreen shrubs are naturally quite bushy and do not need much more than minor pruning. Pruning should take place in the growing season and again you need to:

- Remove dead, diseased or weak growth at any time of the year.
- Remove spent flowers after flowering.
- Only remove any growth damaged by cold weather (frost or winds) once the signs of the last frosts are passed, don't cut back too early in late winter and spring as this will encourage new growth that may become damaged by late cold spells in early spring. In the same way, pruning too close to winter will produce soft new growth that will be damaged by cold winters.
- Some evergreen plants like Santolina will take to pruning the plant back heavily but most evergreens will not.
- Lanky shoots that affect the shape of the plants are best removed or cut back.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 16
Prune an evergreen shrub.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 17

Explain the differences between pruning:

- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from late winter to early spring.**
- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from middle spring to autumn.**
- **Evergreen shrubs.**

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Pruning variegated shrubs

The general pruning of variegated shrubs is not different to pruning any other deciduous or evergreen shrub if the leaves of your shrubs are all uniformly variegated but sometimes the leaves on stems of variegated shrubs can revert back to the original green leafed species. When this happens, remove the entire non-variegated stem at its base where it joins a larger stem or the main stem (normally it is an entire stem that has reverted). If you don't remove these stems eventually the shrub will become almost entirely green.

Use the straight cut to remove these stems.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 18

Explain the differences between pruning:

- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from late winter to early spring.**
- **Deciduous shrubs that flower from middle spring to autumn.**
- **Evergreen shrubs.**
- **Variegated shrubs.**

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can demonstrate the different types of pruning cuts.

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Lesson 6 : Maintenance of Tools

Specific outcomes of this lesson :

Maintain pruning tools.

After you have worked through Lesson 6, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.
- Demonstrate the correct storage and protection of the tool's cutting blades.

Looking after your tools

After using your tools and before you pack them away for the day, you need to make sure that they are:

- **Clean and sterilized:**

All tools should be carefully washed down after use, especially where they may have soil on them, for example when you have done some root pruning.

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If you have been pruning diseased plants, make sure that you clean and sterilise your pruning tools before you prune other plants, so that you do not spread the disease to your other plants.

Tools should be dried and then sterilized with either alcohol or methylated spirits.

- **Sharp:**

Keep your pruning tools sharp at all times and always check that your blades are sharp enough to do the next job. There are many different ways to sharpen pruning tools and how you go about sharpening them will depend on what type of pruning tool you are using, so always check with your supervisor. Remember that tools that are not sharp can bruise and damage the plants being pruned and this will allow insects and diseases to attack your plants.

- **Rust free:**

Where necessary rub oil into the blades and other metal pieces to prevent your tools from rusting, especially when you are using them in rainy weather.

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- **Safe for future use:**

Check that your tools have no chipped blades or broken parts because these tools can be dangerous and lead to injuries. If your tools are broken, hand them to your supervisor for fixing, don't pack them away.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 19
Describe the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.

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Storage and protection of tools

All pruning tools should be packed away after use, making sure that the blade faces into the shelf. Blades that do not have protective covers must face into the shelf because they can cut or hurt anyone entering into the area. Make sure that anyone else using the area will not cut their hand when reaching out for the tool to remove it from the shelf.

To protect your tools, always oil your tools after use by applying 3 in 1 oil to the swivel section of secateurs and loppers for smooth operating ability. Where necessary rub oil into the blades and other metal components that require this for the prevention of rust and then cover them with their protective covers.

Store your tools under lock and key, in a cool, dry place. Don't leave your tools lying out in the rain because they will rust and this will cause your tools to break, become blunt and can cause injury to yourself or others.

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Your Turn...

ACTIVITY 20
Describe how to store and protect the pruning tool cutting blades.

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Lesson Checkpoint

Now that you have worked through this lesson, please check that you are able to do all the specific outcomes and meet the assessment criteria:

- I can describe the condition that tools should be restored to after pruning.
- I can demonstrate the correct storage and protection of the tool's cutting blades.

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