

# Pruning

## Practical skills

Why, where and when to cut, and the rule about flowering time.

*Pruning directs growth; it is not tidying.*

1

### **Remove the three Ds first**

Dead, damaged and diseased wood. Always, at any time of year.

2

### **Then crossing branches**

Anything rubbing will wound and admit disease.

3

### **Open the centre**

Air and light through the middle reduce fungal problems.

4

### **Cut just above an outward bud**

At a slight angle away from it. Growth follows the bud's direction.

5

### **Never remove more than a third**

In one season, unless deliberately renovating.

#### **TIMING RULE**

Flowers on old wood → prune after flowering

Flowers on new wood → prune in late winter

Pruning at the wrong time removes this year's flowers

Clean, sharp tools. A ragged cut heals slowly and invites disease into the wound.