

Massachusetts Master Gardeners Top Ten

Pruning

From ISA-certified arborist Jen Kettell:

1. Relax. It is REALLY hard to kill something by pruning it.
2. Pruning is a marathon, not a sprint.
3. Pruning tools are sharp! Branches are wiley! Wear your safety glasses and leather gloves.
4. When you are learning, spend more time looking and less time cutting.
5. Remember to periodically step back 10-15 ft to assess how your cuts are changing the shape of the tree, shrub, or vine.
6. Train your eye to locate the branch collar and then set your pruning tool before making the cut. Make a clean cut!
7. Be sure tools are sharp. Rainy days are an excellent time to clean and sharpen tools.
8. Pruning is an *art* and a *science*. Keeps plants healthy for the long-haul and looking good!
9. Follow the natural habit of each species.
10. Always cut out dead wood first, exposing all of the live wood for further shaping or thinning.

To learn more about pruning, check out: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/trees-shrubs/pruning-trees-shrubs>