

# Gardening AUSTRALIA

ABC

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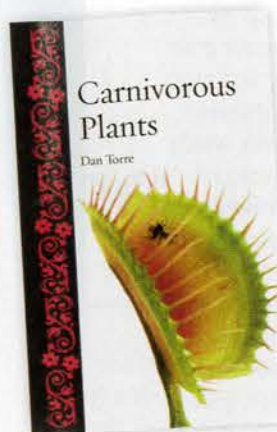
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## ON THE SHELF BOOKS

### CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

Dan Torre

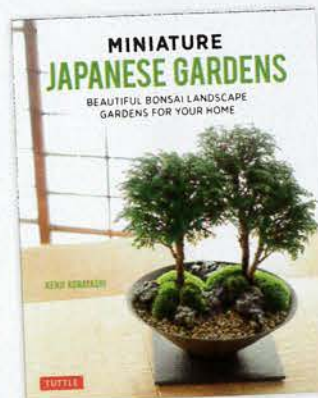
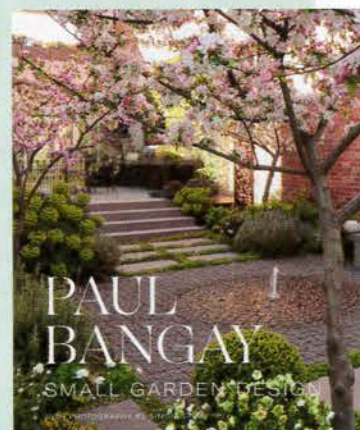
Reaktion Books

The thought of plants trapping and eating insects, spiders and other small creatures certainly sparks the imagination and, indeed, carnivorous plants have featured in films and literature, with their powers often creatively embellished to arouse fear as people-eaters. We're not inclined to think of plants deriving nourishment from 'meat' and yet there are currently more than 700 recognised species of carnivorous plants. This book features exquisite images of many of them, along with the author's entertaining and comprehensive information on their evolution, structure, scientific background, and social and cultural history.

### SMALL GARDEN DESIGN

Paul Bangay with photography by Simon Griffiths  
 Lantern

For people living in compact homes with small outdoor spaces, having a beautiful garden may seem out of reach. Internationally renowned landscape gardener Paul Bangay, known for his elegant, expansive gardens, shows that there is great potential for creating lovely smaller gardens. In his latest inspirational book, he examines how to overcome the challenges of gardening on balconies, terraces and rooftops, and in inner-city gardens, courtyards and light wells. He offers guidance on choosing plants, soil, irrigation, paving, lighting and furniture, with tips for making the space feel bigger. Gorgeous photos by Simon Griffiths perfectly illustrate Bangay's ideas.



### MINIATURE JAPANESE GARDENS BEAUTIFUL BONSAI LANDSCAPE GARDENS FOR YOUR HOME

Kenji Kobayashi  
 Tuttle Publishing

If you love the Zen-like quality of bonsai, this book is sure to inspire you to enhance your home, office or outdoor areas with the serenity of Japanese miniature garden design. It's packed with beautiful illustrations, step-by-step instructions and practical tips on how to design, plant and maintain miniature gardens, using inexpensive plants and materials. Many of the designs pictured throughout the book are accompanied by photographs of the beautiful natural landscapes that inspired their creation.

TEXT CAROLE GRIDLEY



Stylish Willow pots from Northcote Pottery look like ceramic pots but are lighter and stronger. Made from GRC (Glass Reinforced Concrete) – a stone mix that includes fibreglass – they won't crack when knocked over by your furry friends or the forces of nature. The pots have drainage holes and are ideal for the garden or balcony. Available at Bunnings Warehouse in three sizes in shades of salmon, slate and grey-white.  
[northcotepottery.com.au](http://northcotepottery.com.au)

Whether your garden is small or large, give it added flair with a garden finial from Heaven in Earth. You can transform the bamboo canes supporting your colourful mandevilla, sweet peas or other climbing plants into works of art by topping them with a terracotta finial in the shape of a ball, acorn or this onion, which stands about 18cm high. Ideal for a veggie patch or potted garden, they fit snugly over three bamboo canes. Also available are elegant iron finials, which fit over one-inch stakes.  
[heaveninearth.com.au](http://heaveninearth.com.au)



TEXT MARIANNE CANNON

## MARKETPLACE

When garden tools keep rusting, despite all your cleaning efforts, or bend when you exert pressure on them, it's time to find replacements that are made from more durable materials. The lightweight stainless steel Hand Trowel from Digadoo won't bend or rust, even when you leave it out in the garden overnight, and should last a lifetime, enduring years of digging with no more than a few scratches to show for it. Made with a contoured handle, the trowel is 34cm long and weighs just 250g.  
[digadoo.com.au](http://digadoo.com.au)



## ON THE SHELF PRODUCTS



If you've been struggling to cut through branches in your garden, chances are you should be using loppers instead of secateurs. Mr. Fothergill's has a new range of pruning tools from Darlac that are both lightweight and durable. The Darlac Telescopic Ratchet Lopper will help you cut through branches up to 5cm in diameter with greatly reduced effort. It has high-carbon steel blades and oval alloy handles that extend from 67.5cm to 101.5cm with the push of a button, along with non-slip grips. The award-winning lopper weighs 1.59kg.  
[mrfothergills.com.au](http://mrfothergills.com.au)



# How to prune with confidence

**JENNIFER STACKHOUSE** offers two simple rules for pruning just about any flowering shrub in your garden, with plenty of tips to get it right

**F**or many gardeners the thought of pruning a plant causes stress and doubt. Questions crowd in as you stand there, secateurs in hand. When is the right time to prune? How much should I prune? Which part of the plant do I prune? Will I kill my plant? Will it ever flower again?

The first rule of pruning is, don't panic! The second rule is to understand why you are pruning. If you follow these two rules, you can prune with confidence.

## WHY & WHEN TO PRUNE

Pruning is undertaken to shape a plant, remove dead growth and to encourage new growth and flowers. Shaping and removing dead growth can be done throughout the year, as needed.

Shape a plant by removing growth that is in the wrong place (such as a stem that's growing into another plant or another branch on the same plant), cutting away low or wayward growth, or taking off inward-facing branches. Plant shaping also includes pruning that's done to form a hedge, topiary, standard or espalier.

Pruning to encourage new growth is usually done after flowering (or after fruiting if the plant is productive or has ornamental berries). Pruning after a plant has flowered eliminates the risk of pruning at the wrong time and accidentally cutting off any stems that were about to flower.

Dormant plants that flower on new wood, especially roses, are pruned in winter after they have dropped their leaves and before they begin to regrow. The new growth that's stimulated by pruning produces flower buds.

## HOW MUCH?

The amount that's pruned away varies depending on the plant and the reason it is being pruned. However, a good rule of thumb is to not prune a woody plant such as a shrub by more than a third of its overall growth at any one time. Herbaceous perennials can be cut to the ground to regenerate.

Much of the pruning gardeners do on a regular basis consists of cutting off just small amounts of growth. Deadheading (that is, pruning off dead flowers)

removes spent blooms and so prevents seeds forming. Tip-pruning, which is nipping out the growing tip, encourages bushy growth. Annuals and hedging plants are good subjects to tip-prune, as this results in bushier plants.

A much harder prune is done to regenerate a plant or to encourage lots of new growth from its base. Hard-pruning is successful when plants can regrow from old growth or readily produce new growth from their base. When the aim of pruning is to stimulate new growth from the base of the plant, older stems (usually three years old) are removed by completely pruning them off at the base of the plant (see 'Renovate a cane-type shrub' step-by-step on page 42).

Occasionally hard-pruning can kill a plant (lavenders, daisies and most conifers do not respond well to hard-pruning). To check how a plant may respond to pruning, do a test. Cut back part of it and see how it regrows before pruning further.

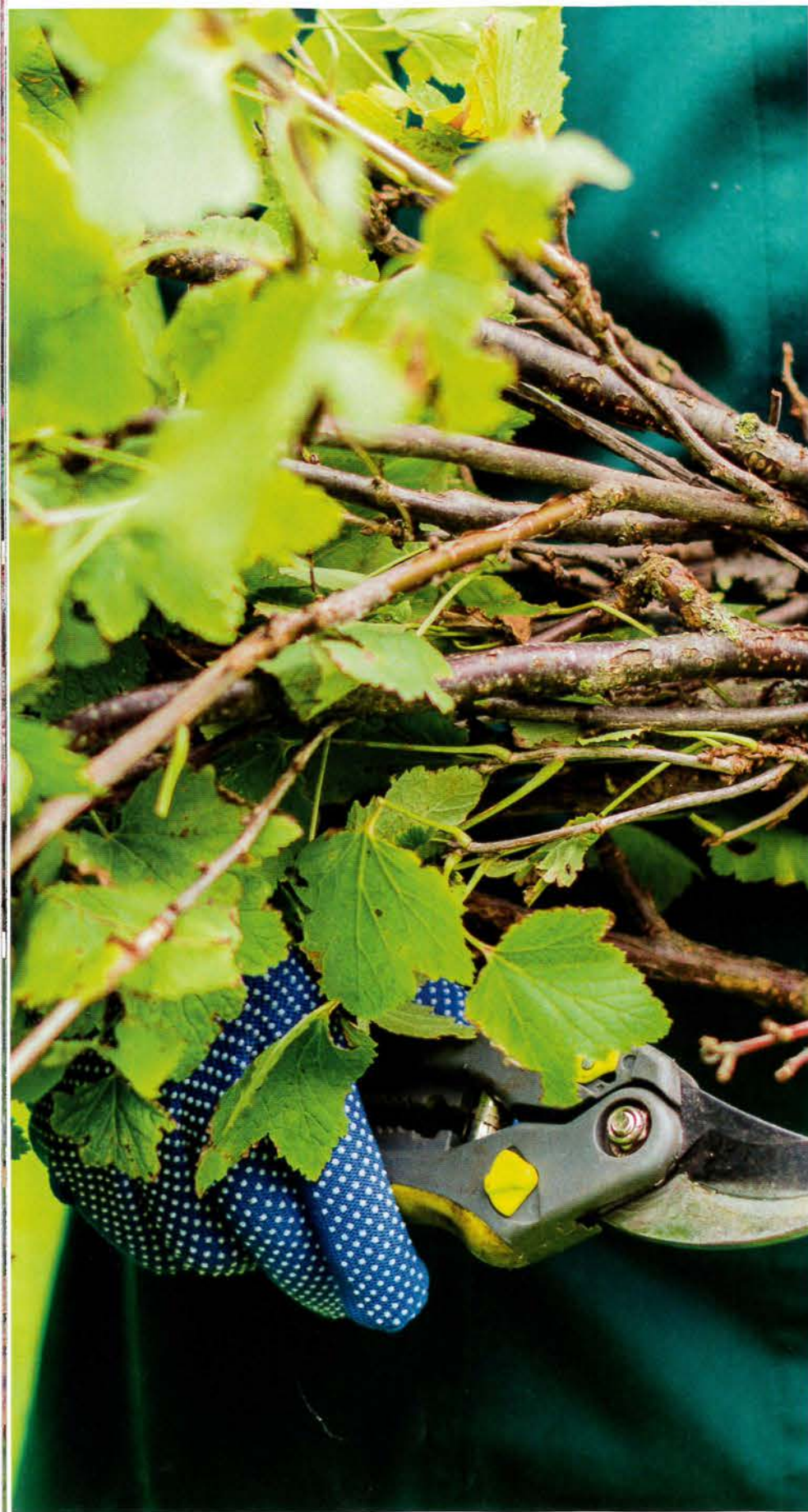
## WHERE TO CUT

Cutting a plant will encourage new growth, so cut back to just above a node (a growth point on the stem). In this way, the new growth will cover the pruning cut. To shape the direction of growth, cut back to a growth point ►

PHOTO: BRUCE HUTCHISON







that's going to shoot in the direction that you want it to, for example, outwards.

After you have pruned, check back from time to time to look for new growth. When plants are actively growing (spring to early autumn), new growth will appear within weeks of pruning. As pruning encourages new growth, it is important to feed and water plants that have been pruned as the new growth begins. Keep supplying regular water as the growth develops.

**WARNING!** Avoid pruning frost-tender plants during late autumn or winter as pruning may encourage new growth that may be damaged by cold. Delay pruning these plants until the weather warms.

### PRUNING TOOLS

Use clean, sharp secateurs to prune small growth. For thicker growth that's too large for secateur blades (usually above 2cm in diameter), use either loppers or a pruning saw. Where there's lots of material to prune – for example, on a hedge – use shears or a powered hedge trimmer. Prune growth that's difficult to reach with a pole pruner. Turn to page 40 for more information on which pruning tools to choose. **GA**

### Tips

- To avoid spreading disease, get into the habit of wiping pruning blades with some tea tree oil, bleach or a disinfectant before cutting another plant.
- Always clean up after pruning. Chop up any soft pruning material and add it to the compost, or use it as mulch. Thicker stems can be mulched or placed into the green waste recycling bin. Put diseased or thorny material into the bin, not in the compost or on the garden.

PHOTOS: ISTOCK

# Your guide to pruning COMMON ORNAMENTAL GARDEN SHRUBS

Follow our seasonal guide to help keep your garden in order and your shrubs flourishing



**Note:** Flowering times can vary depending on climate zone, so adjust pruning times accordingly. Many commonly grown shrubs may flower earlier in warm zones and later in cold zones.

Shrub	Pruning notes	Seasonal action ❄️ winter 🌱 spring 🌻 summer 🍂 autumn
<b>Abelia</b> ( <i>Abelia x grandiflora</i> syn. <i>Linnaea x grandiflora</i> )	Clip or lightly trim at any time when growing to keep bushy or as a hedge; regularly remove old wood.	❄️ Remove old wood at the base in late winter 🌱 🌻 🍂 Clip
<b>Acalypha, copperleaf, Jacob's coat</b> ( <i>Acalypha wilkesiana</i> )	Clip hedges when actively growing. Hard-prune to rejuvenate if needed. <b>Note:</b> sap can cause skin irritation.	🌱 🌻 🍂 Clip ❄️ Hard-prune
<b>Azalea</b> ( <i>Rhododendron</i> Evergreen Azalea hybrids)	Prune after flowering, especially to remove diseased flowers; to renovate old shrubs, hard-prune one-third of the plant.	🌱 Shear after flowering; hard-prune, if necessary, in late spring
<b>Banksia</b> ( <i>Banksia</i> spp.)	Need little pruning; if necessary, prune after flowering to shape. Seed-eating birds may feed on seed heads, so leave these for a bird-friendly garden.	🌱 Deadhead, tip-prune or shape, if required 🌻 Tip-prune or shape, if required
<b>Bottlebrush</b> ( <i>Callistemon</i> spp.)	Prune spent flowers to remove seed heads that can become persistent; hard-prune, if necessary, to rejuvenate plants.	❄️ Hard-prune in late winter to rejuvenate 🌱 🍂 Deadhead
<b>Conifer</b> (various genus and species)	Prune anytime to shape; prune conifer hedges from late spring to early autumn; don't cut into hard or old wood.	❄️ Tip-prune 🌱 🌻 🍂 Prune hedges
<b>Daphne</b> ( <i>Daphne odora</i> )	Prune lightly after flowering.	🌱 Lightly prune or deadhead
<b>Daisy, marguerite daisy</b> ( <i>Argyranthemum frutescens</i> )	Tip-prune young plants to encourage bushiness; prune after flowering; don't cut into hard wood.	🌱 Shear after flowering 🌻 🍂 Tip-prune, if necessary; deadhead



Shrub	Pruning notes	Seasonal action ❄ winter 🌱 spring 🌻 summer 🍂 autumn
<b>Forsythia</b> ( <i>Forsythia x intermedia</i> )	Remove old wood after flowering to make way for new growth. Clip at any time when growing to keep bushy or as a hedge; regularly remove old wood.	❄ After flowering, remove old canes at base of plant
<b>Frangipani</b> ( <i>Plumeria rubra</i> )	Little pruning needed; prune to shape or remove diseased stems, if needed.	❄ Hard-prune, if necessary
<b>Fuchsia</b> ( <i>Fuchsia magellanica</i> , <i>F. triphylla</i> , <i>F.</i> hybrid cultivars)	Prune to encourage bushy growth; tip-prune to shape; remove spent flowers and old leaves (to prevent disease). Tip-pruning in spring delays flowering.	❄ Hard-prune in late winter 🌱 Tip-prune
<b>Grevillea</b> ( <i>Grevillea</i> spp. and cultivars)	Prune after flowering to keep compact. Tip-prune to maintain shape. Old plants can be renovated by hard-pruning by about one-third.	❄ Deadhead when flowering. 🌱 Tip-prune, or hard-prune, if necessary
<b>Hebe</b> ( <i>Hebe x franciscana</i> syn. <i>Veronica x franciscana</i> and other species and cultivars)	Prune after flowering to remove spent flowers and keep neat and compact.	🌱 Tip-prune or shear over bush
<b>Hibiscus</b> ( <i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> )	Prune in late winter to encourage bushy growth and flowering wood; tip-prune and regularly remove spent flowers and old leaves.	❄ Hard-prune in late winter 🌱 Tip-prune, if necessary
<b>Hydrangea</b> ( <i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i> )	Hard-prune, cutting flowered stems back to two plump buds (don't remove stems that haven't flowered); prune repeat-flowering varieties in summer for a flush of autumn flowers; deadhead.	❄ Hard-prune 🌱 Remove spent flowers in late summer; leave flower heads that remain ornamental on the shrub through autumn 🍂 Hard-prune (as per winter) or delay until plants are fully dormant in winter
<b>Kerria</b> ( <i>Kerria japonica</i> )	Remove old wood (canes) after flowering to make way for new growth, cutting at the base of the plant.	❄ Remove old canes
<b>Lavender</b> ( <i>Lavandula</i> spp.)	Shear after flowering to remove spent flowers (note flowering time varies with species); lightly tip-prune to encourage bushy shape; don't cut into old wood.	❄ Deadhead and tip-prune winter- and spring-flowering species 🌱 Deadhead and tip-prune summer-flowering species
<b>Lillypilly</b> ( <i>Acmena</i> spp. and <i>Syzygium</i> spp.)	Tip-prune when actively growing to keep bushy or to hedge; for berry production, prune after berries have finished. Shear anytime to remove psyllid damage in new growth or to hedge.	🌱 Tip-prune or clip hedges in late spring 🍂 Tip-prune or clip hedges
<b>Mexican orange blossom</b> ( <i>Choisya ternata</i> )	Prune anytime after flowering to shape or hedge.	🌱 Tip-prune or clip
<b>Mock orange</b> ( <i>Philadelphus coronarius</i> )	Remove old canes at base of plant. Thin out flowered stems; tip-prune to shape.	❄ Hard-prune old canes 🌱 Thin out flowered canes, tip-prune 🍂 Thin out flowered canes and remove old wood, if necessary

Shrub	Pruning notes	Seasonal action ❄ winter 🌱 spring 🌻 summer 🍂 autumn
<b>Murraya</b> ( <i>Murraya paniculata</i> )	Prune after flowering to encourage new growth, prevent seeding (berries) and keep compact; prune hedges any time while shrubs are actively growing.	🌱 Trim to shape, if necessary 🌱 Prune after flowering 🍂 Trim to shape, if necessary
<b>Pieris</b> ( <i>Pieris japonica</i> )	Prune to shape young plants anytime; prune after flowering.	❄ Prune after flowering
<b>Pittosporum</b> ( <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i> )	Prune to shape hedges anytime during active growth; prune after flowering to remove seeds.	🌱 Tip-prune or clip to shape or remove spent flowers 🍂 Tip-prune or clip to shape
<b>Poinsettia</b> ( <i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i> )	Cut back hard after flowering.	❄ Hard-prune in late winter ❄ Hard-prune (if not done in late winter)
<b>Rhododendron</b> ( <i>Rhododendron</i> spp. and cultivars)	Deadhead immediately after flowering before new growth arises; light-prune if needed to shape or maintain size.	❄ Deadhead in late spring; prune, if needed 🌱 Deadhead late-flowering forms; prune, if needed
<b>Rondeletia</b> ( <i>Rondeletia amoena</i> syn. <i>Ragiera amoena</i> )	Lightly prune after flowering. Avoid pruning in autumn in frost-prone areas.	🌱 Deadhead 🍂 Lightly prune
<b>Rose – Hybrid Tea</b> ( <i>Rosa</i> cultivars)	Hard-prune annually; deadhead and lightly prune to encourage continued flowering.	❄ Hard-prune (prune in early winter in warm zones, mid to late winter in temperate zones, but delay pruning in frost-prone areas) ❄ Hard-prune in early spring in cold zones only; deadhead after flowering 🌱 Deadhead after flowering; in late summer, prune back flowered stems to encourage autumn blooms 🍂 Deadhead
<b>Rose – Spring flowering</b> ( <i>Rosa</i> spp. and cultivars)	Prune after flowering in late spring or early summer (do not hard-prune in winter).	❄ Prune 🌱 Prune (if not pruned in late spring)
<b>Sasanqua camellia</b> ( <i>Camellia sasanqua</i> )	Tip-prune to shape after flowering.	❄ Tip-prune ❄ Tip-prune (if not done in late winter)
<b>Viburnum – deciduous species</b> ( <i>Viburnum opulus</i> and other species)	Prune to shape while actively growing; remove dead wood or thin out overgrown branches; prune after flowering (or after fruiting, if grown for its berries).	❄ Deadhead 🌱 Hard-prune to renovate
<b>Viburnum – evergreen species</b> ( <i>Viburnum odoratissimum</i> , <i>V. tinus</i> )	Prune while actively growing to shape; clip hedges once or twice a year. Prune <i>V. tinus</i> after flowering.	🌱 Tip-prune
<b>Weigela</b> ( <i>Weigela florida</i> )	Remove old canes at base of plant; deadhead.	🌱 Remove oldest canes and deadhead spent flowers



PHOTOS: ISTOCK





# cool tools

Pruning is an essential task in gardening, and it helps to have the right gear, says **MARIANNE CANNON**

## SECATEURS

Good quality secateurs make pruning a pleasure. Find some that feel comfortable in your hand and are made from quality materials with removable parts that can be easily replaced. That way, they'll last for years. Most have a bypass cutting action, where one simple convex cutting blade passes another. These are suited to cutting green material up to about finger thickness, and their design allows you to cut close to the leading stem or branch.

You'll also find anvil secateurs, which have only one cutting blade that closes on a flat blade or 'anvil.' These are ideal for cutting through harder or dead wood. Anvil secateurs tend to crush soft plant tissue, so they are not recommended for pruning roses or tip-pruning shrubs, as this could lead to dieback.

Another style, ratchet secateurs, are designed to cut through thicker stems up to 25mm in diameter. They have a mechanism that steps through in small increments each time you squeeze and release the handles.

## HEDGE SHEARS

Shears are essential for shaping topiary, hedges, shrubs and groundcovers, as well as cutting back perennials and ornamental grasses. Even if you own a powered hedge trimmer, traditional shears are handy for fine-tuning the shape and finishing the pruning job with clean, healthy cuts after you've removed the bulk. Shears can have either straight or wavy blades. The wavy

blades help to hold plant stems in place while you're cutting them but are harder to sharpen. Some models offer a feature at the base of the blade that enables you to cut thicker, harder wood, but generally it's best to revert to loppers or secateurs to avoid damaging the blades of your shears.

## LOPPERS

Bigger blades and longer handles make loppers the tool of choice for cutting through thicker stems, normally 2-5cm in diameter. Apart from the extra power, long handles offer additional reach, which is useful for high and low cutting, and for reaching into thorny bushes. Some come with extendable handles. Like secateurs, there are bypass and anvil-blade loppers. Geared systems on selected models offer additional cutting power.

## PRUNING SAW

You need a pruning saw to cut through branches greater than 5cm in diameter. Pruning saws have jagged teeth designed to rip through live wood. Blades are mostly curved and they cut on both the push and pull stroke, making the saw action effective when cutting above or below. Use long strokes to make use of the whole blade.

## TELESCOPIC POLE PRUNER

This tool is just the thing to take care of those hard-to-reach stems and branches overhead. The pole typically extends from 2.4m to 4m in length, giving the average person a reach of up to 5.5m into a tree

canopy. A regular pruning attachment has a curved blade designed to hook over a branch while the cutting blade, which is operated by a pull-down rope or sliding mechanism, slices through the wood.

The pruner can be either a bypass or a ratchet type, which reduces effort, and is good for cutting branches up to 35mm in diameter. Most pole pruners also have a saw attachment for cutting heavier wood.

Warning: pruning heavy branches that are overhead can be dangerous work. Always dismantle large branches in small, light sections, starting from the tip, and ensure the ground around the tree, where you are standing, is clear of obstacles. **GA**

## tool maintenance

At the end of each working day, give blades a good clean with soapy water to remove sticky sap, then dry and coat the metal with oil. A scourer will help dislodge gunky material if you haven't cleaned your blades in a while. When you stop getting nice clean cuts, sharpen the blades with a diamond or tungsten-carbide sharpening stone. For bypass pruners, only sharpen the outside edge of the cutting blade, never the flat side. The cutting blades of anvil-type pruners can be sharpened both sides because the cutting action is like a knife.



**stay safe**

*Wear gloves when pruning, and if you think the job is too high or too heavy, call in an arborist or professional gardener*

PHOTOS: ISTOCK, GAP PHOTOS/AGENCIA FREE



## PRUNING

### STEP-BY-STEP

#### RENOVATE A CANE-TYPE SHRUB

This pink-flowered deutzia (*Deutzia x hybrida* 'Magician') has congested growth and old flower stems after its beautiful display of blooms through spring and summer. JENNIFER STACKHOUSE gives it a winter tidy up.

**1 CLEAR AWAY** surrounding growth at the base of the plant, and identify the old canes by the grey colour of their bark.

**2 CUT OUT** old canes at the base of the plant, using a pruning saw, and remove any other stems that are congested.

**3 REMOVE** spent flowers (this can also be done after flowering in summer). Fertilise in early spring when new growth resumes.



#### TRY THESE, TOO

You can also use this approach to tidy up other cane-type shrubs, such as forsythia, weigela, mock orange (*Philadelphus* spp.) and red-barked dogwood (*Cornus alba*).

PHOTOS: BRUCE HUTCHISON, ALAMY

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## PRUNING

### STEP-BY-STEP

#### PRUNE A CREPE MYRTLE

JENNY BALDWIN does an annual hard prune on her shrubby crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia* spp.) to keep the flowers at eye height. It's a good way to enjoy the plant's summer colour without letting it develop into a larger tree. If you prefer a tree, let it go!

**1 PLAN** to prune your crepe myrtle in winter, when the stems are bare and it's easy to see what you're doing.

**2 REMOVE** about half the height, using long-handled loppers that can cut through chunky stems.

**3 PRUNE** or rub off all the thin twiggy bits, as well as any dead material, leaving behind only main branches and thicker, healthy sideshoots. It looks severe, but the plant will bush out vigorously when the warm weather arrives.

**4 SPREAD** a bit of compost around to act as food and mulch.



PHOTOS BRENT WILSON, JENNY BALDWIN



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