How to Prune a Tree

MILWAUKIE URBAN FOREST
Growing Trees
Growing Community

Milwaukie municipal code requires property owners adjacent to maintain trees in the right of way adjacent to their property. This includes street trees and vegetated right of ways. The city can maintain these trees if needed and ensures that there is sign and corner clearance. **(MMC 12.12.010)**

Pruning is a vital part of long-term tree maintenance. It provides both structural and aesthetic benefits for trees and keeps roads and sidewalks safe.

Benefits of tree pruning

Pruning is a vital part of long-term tree maintenance. It provides both structural and aesthetic benefits for trees and keeps roads and sidewalks safe.

FASTER HEALING WITH LESS DISEASE

Pruning trees during their dormancy allows them to focus on healing from pruning with less disease risk.

STRONGER BRANCHES

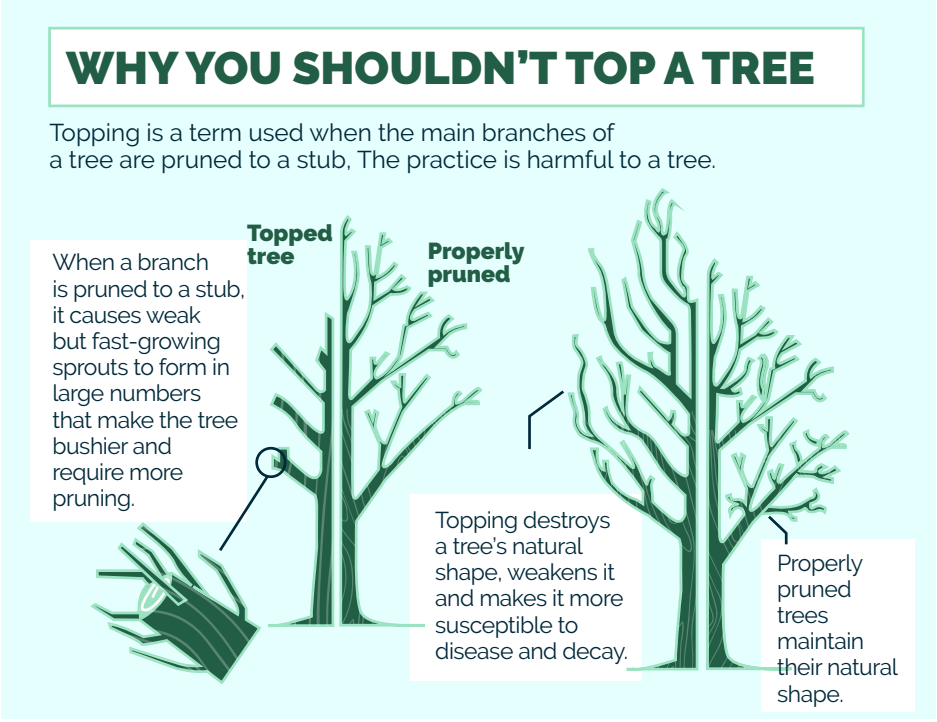
Pruning branches ahead of storms creates more resilient trees

CONTROLLED GROWTH

Pruning allows for shaping of trees and the removal of dead branches. Per ISA Best Management Practices for tree pruning, it is recommended to remove no more than 25% of a tree's branches. Avoid pruning heavily more than once per year.

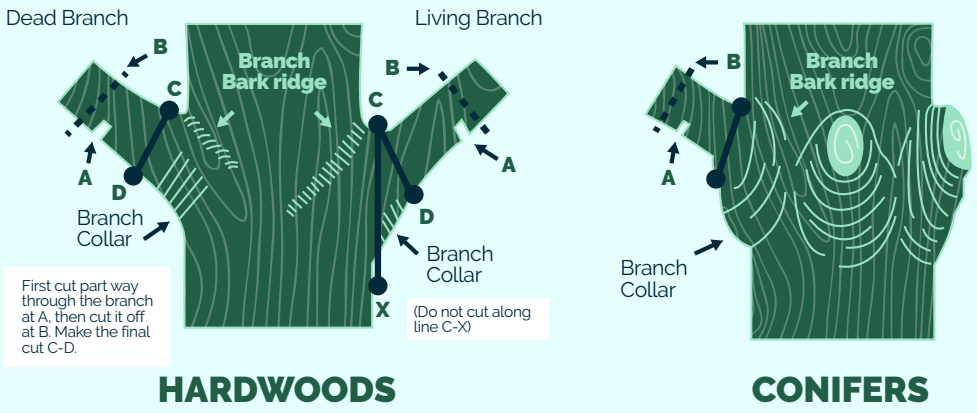
Avoid topping trees

Tree topping refers to the removal of the top of the central stem of a tree, called the leader, as well as the upper main branches. **Tree topping is not an acceptable arboricultral practice.** In topped trees, branches are usually sheared off at a uniform height. The result is an unsightly tree with thin, upright branches called water sprouts at the top. Topping a tree seriously affects its health and value in the landscape. Once a tree is topped, it is highly susceptible to disease, decay and insects. Topped trees create a hazard in the landscape because the branches to decay and break. The water sprouts that grow at the top of the tree have weak, shallow anchors and are likely to break off in a storm.



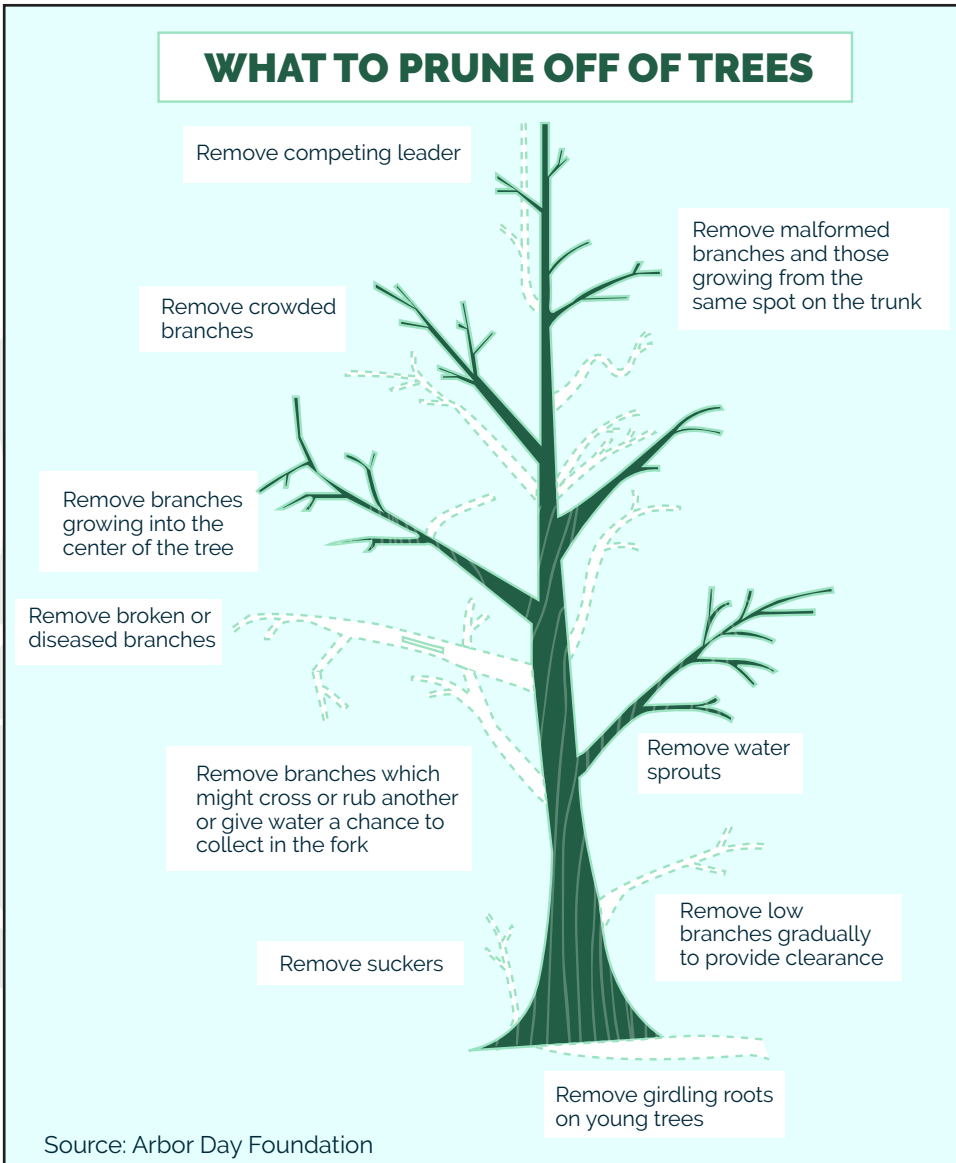
CITY OF MILWAUKIE

PROPER PRUNING PRINCIPLES



Source: The Davey Resource Group

WHAT TO PRUNE OFF OF TREES



Source: Arbor Day Foundation

FOR QUESTIONS OR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

HELLO!

(503) 786-7655
urbanforest@milwaukieoregon.gov
Milwaukieoregon.gov/trees

MILWAUKIE URBAN FOREST
Growing Trees
Growing Community