

TREE PRUNING GUIDE

Pruning encourages the structural development of strong, healthy trees and allows for the removal of low-hanging, nuisance branches



BASIC PRUNING GUIDELINES: SAFETY FIRST!

Before pruning, consider your safety, the safety of your neighbors and the protection of any personal property nearby. Never prune trees that are touching or near utility lines; call the Forestry Division at 303.739.7177 for assistance with these trees.

Use the following decision guide for size of branches to be removed:

Under 2" diameter – go ahead

Between 2" and 4" – think twice

Greater than 4" – have a good reason and seek professional assistance



WHEN TO PRUNE?

Spring - NO; trees are using all of their resources to leaf out

Summer & Fall - OK

Winter - BEST time to prune; trees are dormant

WHAT TOOLS TO USE?

Under 2" diameter – loppers or pruning shears

Between 2" and 4" – handsaw or pole pruner

Always use sharp tools, so the cut is clean and free of jagged edges.

DISPOSING OF BRANCHES

Most trash collection companies will pick-up branch debris as long as the bundles of wood are no longer than 4 feet in length and 12 inches in diameter. Check with your specific trash collection company.

STILL UNSURE?

Call the Forestry Division at 303.739.7177 and we'll arrange a tree pruning demonstration for your homeowners association or neighborhood group.

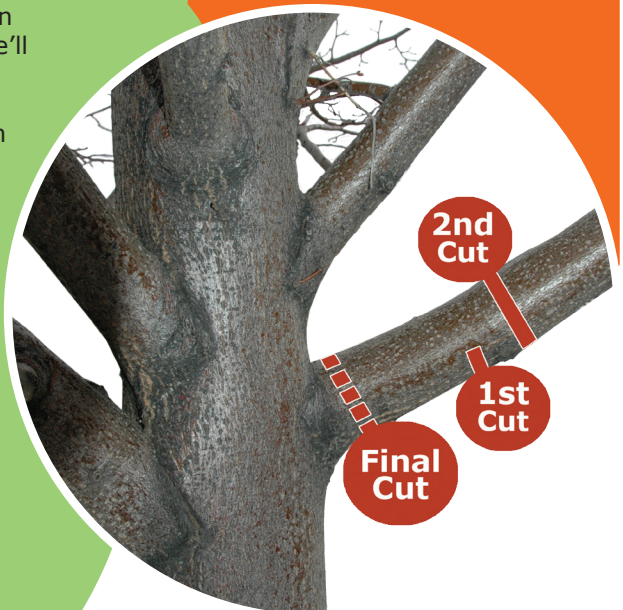
WHERE TO PRUNE?

To remove large branches (over 2" in diameter), use 3 cuts to avoid tearing the bark.

CUT 1: Make the first cut on the underside of the branch about 18 inches from the trunk (to prevent tearing the bark on the branch underside). Undercut one-third to one-half way through the branch.

CUT 2: Make the second cut an inch further out on the top of the branch; cut until the branch breaks free.

CUT 3: Before making the final cut (severing a branch from the main stem), identify where the branch ends and the trunk begins. (Usually there is a bulge or swelling at the base of the branch). Cut at a right angle to the branch just outside of the bulge, ensuring only branch tissue is removed. Prune just beyond the bulge, but DON'T leave a stub. If you can't easily determine where the branch ends and the trunk begins, look for a ridge of bark.



CITY TREE FAQ'S

WHAT IS A CITY TREE?

Aurora's Forestry Division cares for nearly 40,000 city street trees as a free service to residents. City-owned trees are deciduous (leaf-dropping) trees that are most often planted in front of single-family homes in public right-of-way easements. Public right-of-way easements are generally within five feet of sidewalks or in planting strips between sidewalks and streets. Please note that there are some trees planted in the public right-of-way that the City of Aurora has not planted and does not maintain. These include, but are not limited to, all evergreen, cottonwood and Russian-olive trees. Property owners are not allowed to plant trees in public right-of-way easements.

WHEN WILL MY CITY TREE BE PRUNED?

The city is divided into "grid" areas and city tree maintenance is scheduled grid by grid. To see when crews will be in your area, check the grid pruning map at AuroraGov.org/Trees or call the Forestry Division at 303.739.7177.

HOW IS CITY TREE MAINTENANCE PRIORITIZED?

Tree maintenance will only be provided ahead of schedule if a tree poses a risk to public safety. In order of severity, this includes large broken and hanging limbs, trees with hazardous defects, dead or dying trees, large dead limbs, and lastly, low limbs impeding traffic. Trees meeting these criteria are pruned in order of hazard level as opposed to request date.

CAN I PRUNE MY CITY TREE MYSELF?

Limited maintenance is allowed, but it is illegal to damage, kill or remove city-owned trees, whether intentionally or accidentally. Additionally, residents are not allowed to use chainsaws to prune city trees. Residents may only prune limbs that are smaller than 4 inches in diameter and nothing above 15 feet. Visit AuroraGov.org/Trees for pruning information and resources.

CAN I HIRE SOMEONE TO PRUNE MY CITY TREE?

Residents may hire a private licensed arborist to perform city tree maintenance at their own expense. Please note that the city of Aurora will not reimburse residents for any related costs. Only arborists licensed in the city of Aurora may work on city trees and a permit must be obtained from the Forestry Division prior to beginning work. A list of licensed arborists can be found at AuroraGov.org/Trees.

CAN I REMOVE A CITY TREE?

It is illegal for residents to remove a city tree. If you think your city tree needs to be removed, please call to request a tree inspection. Only trees that are dead, dying or pose a risk to public safety will be removed.

For more information, visit AuroraGov.org/Trees or call the Forestry Division at 303.739.7177