### Why Prune?
Pruning encourages health growth, more flowering and fruit production

### When is the best time to prune?
- Pruning should be done during dormancy - in late winter/early spring - not fall, as it leaves plant open to drying out in colder months.
- Many shrubs can be pruned up until midsummer.
- Roses - remove dead portions of canes
- Clematis - watch where leafing out ends and prune remaining dead portion of vines

**Exceptions:**
- Spring flowering shrubs i.e. Lilac, weigelia, and azaleas. - Prune just after they bloom.
- Trees: Maple, birches, and cherries late spring
- Hydrangeas that bloom on old wood of previous year. Prune just after flowers fade.

### What parts need pruning?
- The 4 D’s: Dead, damaged, dangerous, diseased
- Co-leaders
- Crossed/crowded branches
- Extensions
- Low branches
- Water sprouts
- Sucker
- Regeneration and renewal

### How to prune:
- Cut back to branch collar.
- Use three cut method to prevent bark tearing.
- Cut back to bud.
- Don’t leave stubs!
- Only remove 1/3 of the plant in one year.
**Best tools** for pruning:
- Hand pruners – Bypass blade style
- Loppers – Bypass blade style
- Hand saws
- Pole saw with pruner

**Safe pruning** clothing/preparedness:
- Safety glasses are a must - branches are sharp!
- Long sleeves, long pants and gloves are good
- Footwear should cover the foot - no flip-flops here
- Have a partner if using a ladder - every time

**Disposing of refuse:**
- Check with your county for sites
- Take diseased and invasive material to a waste site that heats refuse to kill seeds and pathogens
- Never put refuse in household trash

**Example:** Common Buckthorn – invasive

**Our favorite references:**

**Essential Pruning Techniques:**
Great how-to’s for pruning trees and shrubs.