

Year 3 November -March

Side shoots will have developed from the 5/6main branches you pruned last November

These now need pruning back as in year 2 -following these rules

- Remove dead or diseased wood
- Remove branches that are crossing or heading toward your nice open centre
- Shorten the secondary branches following the rules of year 2.

Only allow your young tree to ripen 2 or 3 fruits in its first year. Any more than this are best picked off in early July.

PLUMS AND CHERRIES

These are subject to disease if pruned in winter, so in years 1-3, they are best pruned at bud burst in early April. In later years, they are usually pruned after the last of the fruit has been picked - but by the end of September at the latest.

This will complete the formative pruning of your tree. Maintenance pruning and pruning for fruit can then be undertaken in future years - quite often many trees never receive any further pruning!

If you would like to learn more, why not come to one of our Pruning Courses - informative and good fun! Do ask for details.

FORMATIVE PRUNING OF YOUNG FRUIT TREES



Your young fruit tree will need some formative pruning to achieve a well balanced, open vase shaped, fruitful tree

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Planting is best carried out between the months of October- April for container grown plants and between November -March for bare root plants.

Please read and carefully follow our leaflet '10 Tips to Successful Planting and Aftercare'

Your Goal

With fruit trees aim to achieve an open , vase shaped head to the tree this will promote—

- Good air circulation which in turn reduces pest and disease and encourages a good healthy tree
- Allows the penetration of plenty of light & sunlight to ripen the fruit and set buds for the following years fruit
- Encourage fruit formation where you want it

Apples and Pears

Pruning early in the dormant season (November) will give you the maximum reaction from the plant i.e. it will produce a lot of growth during the next growing season. Thus for a new tree and probably an impatient new owner November is the best time to do your formative pruning. Pruning can be carried out at any time between November and March - but as stated above - the earlier the work is done, the better the reaction will be.



Pic. 1. One year old maiden tree with few if any side branches/feathers

Follow the pruning plan as detailed over the next 3 years

Year 1 - immediately after planting (1yr Maiden)

Pic. 1 Prune the main stem of the young tree just above a bud at the following height

- 75-90cm (2¹/₂/3ft) for a BUSH shaped tree
- 120cm (4ft) for a HALF STANDARD shaped tree
- 150cm (5ft) for a STANDARD shaped tree
(note your chosen rootstock will govern the size and ultimate spread of your new tree.)

This 'beheading' will change the hormonal balance of your tree and encourage side shoots to develop during the next growing season.

Year 2 November - March (2yr Maiden)

Look at all your new side branches and select up to 5 or 6 of the best spaced ones.

- Prune each of these back by half cutting just above a bud.
- Prune back to an outward facing bud—this will be the direction of the new growth.
- Remove any other unwanted branches below those you have selected to keep.



Pic. 2

Pic. 2. Two year old maiden tree with side branches/feathers