



## Question of the Week

**Q:** To prune or not to prune? A lot of home landscapers ask this question.

**A:** Although not all trees and shrubs require pruning, there are four situations when it makes sense to prune:

- 1) **To improve a plant's appearance.** Over time, trees and shrubs may grow too big for the space available. Where space is limited, regular pruning becomes necessary to keep plants in bounds.
- 2) **To maintain a plant's intended purpose in a landscape.** Pruning encourages flower and fruit development and helps to maintain trees' and shrubs' desired forms.
- 3) **To promote plant health.** This involves removing diseased or insect infested wood, removing crossing or rubbing branches, and thinning the crown to increase airflow, which may reduce pest problems.
- 4) **To protect people and property.** Remove branches that could fall and cause injury or property damage; trim branches that interfere with lines of sight on streets or driveways; and remove branches that grow into utility lines. *Don't* prune near electrical and utility wires. Contact utility companies or city maintenance workers to handle it.

If you want to prune trees and shrubs, but don't know the right techniques, call or email our Family, Home & Garden Education Center (contact information below) for help.

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or e-mail us at [answers@unh.edu](mailto:answers@unh.edu)