

Perennial, Tree & Shrub Pruning Chart Zone 8b

<i>Plant</i>	<i>growing season</i>	<i>When to prune/cut back:</i>	<i>How much & what to prune</i>	<i>notes</i>
<i>Abelia</i>	Spring-fall	Late winter	Cut out any dead wood. Large varieties can be pruned heavy to maintain size & shape. For dwarf varieties, cut back leggy shoots anytime to encourage compact growth.	Blooms on new growth. Prune as needed.
<i>Agapanthus</i>	Spring-summer	After hard freeze; dead head through growing season	Cut out freeze damaged leaves, avoiding any emerging new or healthy growth	Agapanthus leaves are frost & freeze sensitive; prune out damaged leaves for aesthetic appeal
<i>Althea, Rose of Sharon</i>	Summer-early fall	Late winter: January-February	Remove dead branches, interior/crossing branches back to point of origin	Do not top or shear if it's outgrowing its spot. Best to replace with something smaller.
<i>Azaleas</i>	Spring	Immediately after blooming, April-May	As needed. remove dead wood and long leggy stems	Multi-blooming azaleas can be pruned the same way, after spring bloom
<i>Camellias</i>	Late fall-early winter	After blooming and before spring growth	As needed every few years; cut back dead, crossing, spindly branches to their base. Hedge prune leggy shoots to maintain natural shape.	Flower buds set in the summer, do not prune during this time. Limb up interior branches for a structure tree shape

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<i>Crape Myrtle</i>	Summer-early fall	Late winter	As needed: remove dead/diseased wood, interior branches to create open airy shape, and branch tips and seed pods	Avoid topping or shearing. This creates knobby growths and brittle wood. This practice makes trees susceptible to pest & disease.
<i>Ferns (frost sensitive) ex: asparagus fern</i>	Spring-fall	After hard freeze	Cut back freeze damaged fronds to crown of plant	Mulch going into winter months to protect crowns of new plants.
<i>Ferns (winter hardy) ex: holly fern</i>	Spring-fall	Late winter-early spring	Cut back old fronds before new growth appears	Mulch going into winter months to protect crowns of new plants.
<i>Hibiscus, hardy</i>	Spring-late summer	In the fall	Cut back canes to ground level	Plant will send up new canes in the spring
<i>Gardenia</i>	Early summer	After blooming	As needed; cut back any dead or damaged branches to point of origin	Usually doesn't require pruning unless to maintain or create shape
<i>Hosta</i>	Spring-summer	After hard freeze	Cut back all freeze damaged leaves	Mulch to protect crowns through winter; especially for new plantings
<i>Hydrangeas: macrophylla (a.k.a garden mophead, French) & oakleaf</i>	Early summer	After blooming	cut back old blooms & dead/unproductive canes to base	Blooms on old wood. Cut back faded blooms to first set of buds; great dried flowers
<i>Hydrangea paniculata (ex: Limelight)</i>	Summer-fall	Late winter-early spring when leafless	cut back old blooms & dead/unproductive canes to base	Grows in full sun to part shade, blooms on new growth

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<i>Lantana</i>	Early spring-fall	Mid summer to maintain size & after hard freeze - early spring	Well established plants can be cut back to near ground level; less hardy varieties cut back by ½ to 1/3 rd	Blooms on new growth, keeping old wood will only clutter the plant; if pruning in winter, apply mulch to protect crowns
<i>Mexican Heather</i>	Spring - fall	Mid summer to freshen up leggy plants; & After hard freeze - early spring	Can be cut back to the ground if well established; ½ to 1/3 rd if newly planted	
<i>Nandina, heavenly bamboo</i>	Blooms in spring, sets berries fall-winter	Late winter-early spring	Do not hedge prune! cut back canes to ground level. Remove dead and/or leggy canes, and up to 1/3 of all canes to thin the plant out	Regularly prune nandinas to maintain a compact healthy form. Dwarf varieties need only deadwood pruning
<i>Oleander</i>	Summer-fall	Late winter	As needed to maintain height, shape and structure (hedge pruning and/or thinning)	Blooms on new growth <i>Use caution: all parts of the plant are poisonous. Do not burn cuttings.</i>
<i>Purple coneflower</i>	Summer-fall	After flowering/late fall	Cut back spent flower stems to base of plant	Somewhat winter hardy; do not disturb during winter months

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<i>Roses (shrub, hybrid tea & drift)</i>	Early spring-fall	Hard prune in Mid February; dead head and maintain shape through growing season; lightly prune in fall	Cut back good canes by ½ or more as needed; cut back dead, interior & spindly canes to base of plant	Fertilize and mulch at the mid February pruning, and again late spring-early summer
<i>Roses (climbing & old garden varieties)</i>	Early summer	After blooming	As needed; remove dead canes, prune to maintain shape	Not necessary to prune yearly; as needed basis.
<i>Rudbeckias</i>	Summer-fall	After blooming/late fall	Cut back spent flower stems to base of plant	Rudbeckias like black eyed susans are evergreen/semi-evergreen; winter hardy
<i>Salvia, blue</i>	Spring - fall	As needed	Dead head as needed and cut back spindly/spent stems throughout the growing season	Blue salvia is evergreen to semi-evergreen in our area; cut back as needed in late summer through early spring to keep rejuvenated
<i>Verbena, perennial</i>	Spring-late summer	Mid-summer to maintain size and shape & in the late winter/early spring	For mid-summer, lightly prune runner ends between blooming periods; cut back old growth in late winter/early to rejuvenate before new growth appears	Perennial verbenas like Homestead purple are winter hardy and semi-evergreen; do not disturb in the winter months

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<i>Wisteria</i>	Spring	After spring blooming, and again in late winter (jan-feb)	In summer, cut back runners to 5 leaflets. In late winter, cut back those same runners again to 2 buds. Also cut back any dead wood or spindly growth.	Blooms on new wood; can be invasive, pruning is crucial to control & maintain shape.
<i>Japanese Magnolia</i>	Late winter-spring	After spring bloom	As needed to maintain single or 2-3 multi trunk tree	Slow growing; remove dead or damaged limbs
<i>Spirea (spring blooming ex: Bridal's Wreath)</i>	spring	After bloom	Cut back overgrown canes to main trunk; remove suckers	Bloom on old wood; prune AFTER blooming ends. Dead wood can be removed anytime
<i>Spirea (summer blooming ex: S. japonica)</i>	summer	Late winter-early spring	As needed to maintain shape and size; remove old woody canes at base; remove up to half the top to promote shrubbiness.	At pruning, also remove last years dried blooms, and dead or damaged canes. Trim lightly after first bloom
<i>Elephant Ears</i>	Late spring-killing frost	Few days after killing frost	Cut back freeze damaged growth for a tidy landscape. During growing season, keep dead, yellow and limp leaves cut back	Dead growth can be left through winter to insulate roots but not usually necessary in our area. EE's are tough!

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<i>Coral Honeysuckle</i>	Spring, summer, fall	After first heavy bloom (if needed immediately) or late fall (typical pruning time)	as needed to maintain size and shape, and to remove dead vines. Cut back to main stem.	Provide a strong support; evergreen in mild winters
<i>American beautyberry</i>	Late spring- early summer; berries in late summer- fall (persist into winter)	Late winter; blooms on new wood	For shrubby compact growth: cut down to near ground: 6-8" height; for natural habit, thin out older/dead branches to ground level every few years as needed.	Roots easily; used pruned plant material for stem cuttings.
<i>Milkweed (natives)</i>	June- August (depends on species)	Annuals: in fall or after killing frost. Perennials: late winter/early spring after basal new growth appears	Annuals: to the ground. Collect seeds at this time Perennials: cut back stems to near ground level	Remember: milkweed is the host plant for monarchs. Monitor for caterpillars and chrysalis.
Milkweed (tropical)	Late summer- fall	Thanksgiving	To the ground	Do not allow to persist into the winter to reduce OE infections in monarchs. Native milkweeds are a better selection.

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<i>Cast Iron Plant</i>	New growth comes on in spring-summer	Early spring	To the ground for older, raggedy plantings or thin out battered/yellow/brown leaves to rejuvenate	Cutting to ground is easier but will be slow to regrow. Thin out damaged leaves annually or as needed to maintain attractiveness.
<i>Banana</i>	summer	After killing frost or late winter prior to new growth emerging.	Remove dead foliage back to living tissue	Tattered and yellowing leaves can be removed throughout the season to maintain attractiveness.
<i>Bougainvillea</i>	Spring, summer, fall	Late winter/early spring; After heavy bloom cycle, tip prune throughout growing season, and light prune in fall after killing frost	Thin out, shape and remove old/dead growth in late winter/early spring. Light prune after heavy bloom. Cut back tips of branches throughout growing season to promote blooms. clean up growth habit with a light prune in the fall.	Bloom on new growth; can prune unruly or damaged canes anytime. Pruning is crucial for maximum blooms. allow to dry out between waterings for better blooming

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<i>Angel's trumpet</i>	Summer- fall	fall	To promote a tree form, begin pruning after the Y shape forms from central leader. Prune back to main branches to maintain structure, size and healthy, blooming growth.	All plant parts are toxic and exude an irritant when cut. wear gloves while pruning; if grown in pots, prune back in fall to reduce size and bring indoors before frost/freezing.
<i>Butterfly bush (buddleia)</i>	Early summer- late fall	Late winter- early spring as new growth appears	Prune in spring to maintain desired shape and habit and to remove old or dead branches. buddleias become lanky without a hearty spring pruning. Aim is to debulk.	Great nectar plant for butterflies. Blooms on new growth. Focus more on de-bulking over technique. Dwarf selections require lighter pruning.
<i>Canna</i>	Spring, summer, fall	After killing frost or late winter/early spring before new growth appears	Cut back dead foliage to new growth.	Cut back spent flower stalks to promote new growth and more blooms during the season