

Sampson County Pruning Calendar

Month	Plants	Remarks
January	Shade Trees: oak, hickory, beech, poplar, sycamore, ginkgo, Bleeder trees: birch, dogwood, elm, maple, blueberry	Prune undesired and storm damaged limbs. For bleeder trees heavy pruning should be done during the coldest weather. For light pruning of bleeder trees see July.
February	Fruit Trees: apple, pear, plum, cherry, peach & nectarine, blueberry	Prune annually for best fruit production. See "Training and Pruning Fruit Trees in NC".
	Grapes	Prune annually to improve fruit production and to make the vine training easier.
	Summer flowering shrubs: crape myrtle, rose of Sharon, butterfly bush, eleagnus, fall flowering hydrangeas	Prune if shrub like form is desired or if plants need shaping.
	Ornamental Grasses: lirioppe, pampas grass, mondo grass, miscanthus, etc.	Trim annually. Important to trim off previous year's growth before the spring growth begins.
	Overgrown Broadleaf Shrubs: Ligustrum, boxwood, osmanthus, photinia, holly, cleyera, viburnum	Prune in late February to desired size. Rejuvenate by pruning out 1/3 of shrub each year. As a general rule try not to cut more than 1/3 of the bush in any year.
	Camellia: Japonica and sasanqua	Prune any time after flowering but not later than July 10.
	Crabapple	Prune out water sprouts and out-of-shape limbs
	Mountain Laurel	Prune to desired shape. Cuts MUST be made prior to bud break in spring.
	Conifers & Narrowleaf Evergreens: hemlock, juniper, arborvitae, leyland cypress	Trim away excess growth to improve shrubs appearance. Do not trim away all of the green foliage.
March	Rose	Prune annually for best flower production. Trim early in the month before new spring growth begins
	Nandina	Prune as needed. Cut the leggy and oldest canes near the ground. New shoots will develop at the location of the pruning cuts.

	Abelia	Shape plants to desired form early in March
March	Spring flowering shrubs: spirea, forsythia, flowering quince, loropetalum, breath-of-spring, weigela, lilac, etc	Prune IMMEDIATELY after flowering but before JULY 10. Cut oldest limbs near the ground level for constant rejuvenation of shrubs.
April	Azalea	Light pruning after flowering but not after JULY 10. Overgrown azaleas should be pruned in February, but you will have no blooms in spring.
	Winter damaged plants	Cut out any cold damaged branches at the end of the month.
	Berry producing shrubs: holly, pyracantha, etc	Prune while in flower to prevent removal of all berries. Shape to desired form.
	Spring flowering trees: flowering cherry, Bradford pear, serviceberry, etc	Prune only as needed, IMMEDIATELY after blooming.
May	Rhododendron	Prune after flowering but not after JULY 10. Always prune to a whorl of leaves or to the next branch. Renovation pruning should be done in February.
	Hedges: Privet, abelia, holly, euonymus, boxwood, etc	Prune as desired, always make top of hedge narrower than the bottom.
June	Conifers & Narrowleaf evergreens: hemlock, juniper, arborvitae, white pine, leyland cypress	Shape plants to their desired size. Prune in late June through July. Trim only the new growth. White pines should be trimmed in summer (only new growth).
	Gardenia	Prune immediately after bloom, not after AUGUST 10.
	Perennials: phlox, shasta daisy, coneflower, rubeckia, etc	Remove old flowers to encourage re-bloom.
	Chrysanthemums	Pinch out growth tips to make bushier plants, discontinue pinching around July 10.
	Hydrangea: Big leaf or florist	Prune while flowering or immediately after. (Usually pink or blue flowers)
	Fruit Trees	Remove water sprouts
July-Aug	Bleeder Trees: maple, birch, elm, styrax & dogwood	Perform light pruning as desired.
	Rose	Prune leggy plants only and fertilize after pruning for fall flowering.

	Hedges	As needed, keep bottom wider than tops
	Brambles: Blackberry & raspberry	Prune out the wood that bore fruit, cutting canes near ground level.
Sept – Oct	Any plants	DO NOT PRUNE shrubs or trees in late summer or early autumn. You may remove any dead limbs from shrubs or trees.
Nov – Dec	Brush	Remove any underbrush as it is easy to see.
	Berry Producing plants: holly, nandina, pyracantha, etc. Blueberry	Use berries indoors or in wreaths as decorations. Prune blueberries in the dormant months between Dec – March after the leaves have fallen.

*Special Note: Some trees should be allowed to let their lowest limbs grow until they sweep the ground. Those trees are Southern Magnolia, Deodora Cedar, American Holly, Hemlock, and White Pine.

For more information on gardening, landscapes, or pruning contact the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Clinic at (910) 592-7161.