



"Your Outdoor Source"

2442 State Route 27 – North Brunswick, NJ 08902 – (732) 297-1244 – Open Seven Days

Reasons to Prune

Pruning is done to remove parts of the plant that are not longer useful. There are many reasons why these parts might no longer benefit the plant. Some reasons are functional and will improve the health of the plant. Other reasons are purely aesthetic and will enhance or change the look of the plant. Either way pruning can be a form of art if it is done well and results in a healthier, more attractive specimen.

Some functional reasons to prune include:

1. Improve the plants overall health- Frequently removing older stems encourages a plant to put energy into new growth, thus keeping the plant young.
2. Control or direct new growth- Each cut will stop the plants growth in one direction and redirect it in another, guiding the shape and size of the plant.
3. Prevent the spread of disease- Removing dead or damaged branches will decrease the chance of disease entering through dead wood and spreading throughout the plant.
4. Increase the number and quality of fruit, flowers and foliage- Pruning at the right time and in the right places can increase the number of shoots produced by the plant thus increasing yield.
5. Compensate for roots loss during transplanting- Plants have a balance between top growth and roots and when roots are lost in the process of digging an appropriate amount of top growth should also be removed.
6. Improve air circulation and allow light to reach inner and lower leaves- It is important to thin dense growth periodically to improve overall shape and health.
7. Correct weak or narrow crotches in a tree- If a double leader develops, remove the weaker, less desirable limb to avoid damage to the tree in the future.

Pruning for looks is also a popular practice. There are many motives behind pruning to achieve a certain look. Here are just a few:

1. Introduce shape and structure to a garden- Pruned formal hedges of different heights and widths can be used in patterns or along borders to create beautiful effects.
2. Create a focal point- Pruning a plant to grow along a wall such as an espalier or creating a topiary plant sculpture are typical ways pruning can change the look of a plant and attract attention.
3. Expose colorful stems and bark- In many plants the some limbs can be removed when the plant is young to reveal decorative stems and colorful bark, especially in the winter.
4. Create more space for planting- Removing lower limbs can transform a shrub into a small tree, creating an elegant shape and allow more space for planting underneath