Pruning Deciduous Shrubs

The Morton Arboretum

Common Name	Scientific Name	Method & When To Prune
Almond, flowering	*Prunus glandulosa*	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back); flowers on old wood
Allspice, Carolina	*Calycanthus floridus*	prune after flowering or in early spring (renewal or heading-back); flowers mostly on old wood, but can also flower on new wood
Barberry, Japanese	*Berberis thunbergii*	prune in late winter/early spring (shear, thin, or rejuvenate); flowers on old wood. Considered invasive, planting is discouraged.
Bayberry	*Myrica pensylvanica*	prune in late winter/early spring (renewal or heading- back annually or rejuvenate when needed); flowers on old wood
Beautybush	*Kolkwitzia amabilis*	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back annually or rejuvenate when needed); flowers on old wood
Bluebeard, Blue spirea	*Caryopteris* x *clandonensis*	rejuvenate annually in late winter/early spring; top dies back to ground in harsh winters; flowers on new wood
Butterfly bush	*Buddleia* species	rejuvenate annually in late winter/early spring; flowers on new wood
Cherry, purple sand	*Prunus* x *cistena*	prune after flowering (heading- back); flowers on old wood
Chokeberry	*Aronia* species	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back); flowers on old wood
Cinquefoil	*Potentilla* species	prune in late winter/early spring (renewal); flowers on new wood
Cotoneaster	*Cotoneaster* species	Prune after flowering (heading-back or renewal; flowers on old wood
Currant, alpine	*Ribes alpinum*	prune in late spring after new growth matures; rejuvenate in early spring when needed; flowers on old wood
Deutzia	*Deutzia gracilis*	prune after flowering (heading-back and renewal); rejuvenate when needed; flowers on old wood
Dogwood, gray	*Cornus racemosa*	Prune late winter/early fall (heading back or renewal); flowers on old wood
Dogwood, red-osier	*Cornus sericea*	prune late winter/early spring to stimulate new, colorful stems (renewal); can rejuvenate; flowers on old wood

Euonymus, burning bush	*Euonymus alatus*	prune in late winter/early spring (renewal or heading-back); flowers on old wood. Considered invasive, planting is discouraged.
Euonymus, wintercreeper	*Euonymus fortunei*	prune anytime between February and mid-summer (heading back); flowers on old wood
Forsythia	*Forsythia x intermedia*	prune in late spring after flowers (renewal and heading-back); rejuvenate when needed; flowers on old wood
Fothergilla	*Fothergilla gardenii*	prune in late spring after flowers (heading-back); flowers on old wood
Fringetree	*Chionanthus virginicus*	as a shrub remove unwanted stems; as a tree prune in early spring (heading-back); flowers on old wood
Honeysuckle	*Lonicera* species	all honeysuckles respond well to all types of pruning in early spring or after flowers
Hydrangea, bigleaf	*Hydrangea macrophylla*	prune after bloom (heading-back); flowers on last year's wood, although some new cultivars also bloom on new wood;
Hydrangea, oakleaf	*Hydrangea quercifolia*	prune after flowering (heading-back); flowers on old wood; minimal pruning required
Hydrangea, panicled	*Hydrangea paniculata*	prune in late winter/early spring (heading-back); flowers on new wood
Hydrangea, wild	*Hydrangea arborescens*	Prune severely in late winter/early spring; cut back last year's stems to within 2 buds of the ground just after growth begins; flowers on new wood
Kerria, Japanese	*Kerria japonica*	Renewal prune older stems to ground after flowering; flowers mostly on old wood, but can also flower on new growth
Lilac, common	*Syringa vulgaris*	prune after flowering (renewal); rejuvenate old shrubs in late winter/early spring as needed; flowers on old wood
Lilac, Persian	*Syringa x persica*	prune after flowering (renewal); flowers on old wood
Mockorange	*Philadelphus* species	prune after flowering; rejuvenate in late winter/early spring; flowers on old wood
Privet	*Ligustrum* species	prune from late winter through summer; can be sheared; flowers on old wood (considered invasive, planting is discouraged)
Quince, flowering	*Chaenomeles* species	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back; rejuvenation prune in early spring; flowers on old wood

Rhododendron, azalea	*Rhododendron* species	little pruning is needed; renewal prune when dormant
Rose	*Rosa* species	**climbers and ramblers**: bloom in early summer on old wood, prune after flowering, leave new growth for next year **hybrid bush-type**: flowers on new wood; remove dead canes and cut back in spring; **shrub roses**: prune out old, diseased, or unwanted canes in spring, head-back after flowering
Rose-of-Sharon	*Hibiscus syriacus*	Prune in late winter/early spring (renewal or heading back); flowers on new wood
Snow berry	*Symphoricarpos* species	prune in late winter/early spring (renewal); rejuvenate older plants as needed; flowers on new wood
Spirea, spring flowering	*Spiraea prunifolia*, *S. vanhouttei*	prune after flowering (renewal); flowers on old wood; over-grown plants may be rejuvenated
Spirea, summer flowering	*Spiraea* x *bumalda* *Spiraea japonica*	prune in late winter/early spring before they leaf out; flowers in summer on new wood; rejuvenate as needed in early spring
Viburnum	*Viburnum* species	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back); flowers on old wood
Winterberry	*Ilex verticillata*	prune in late winter/early spring (heading back); flowers on new wood
Weigela	*Weigela* hybrids	prune after flowering (renewal heading-back); can be rejuvenated; flowers on old wood
Witch hazel, Common	*Hamamelis virginiana*	prune in early spring (renewal or heading-back); flowers on new wood; can be rejuvenated
Witch hazel, Vernal	*Hamamelis vernalis*	prune after flowering (renewal or heading-back); flowers on old wood; can be rejuvenated