

Pruning & Spring Gardening

 **Gilcrease**
ORCHARD

By: Mark Ruben

Pruning Tools

- ▶ Fingers (pinching)
- ▶ Pruning Shears
- ▶ Lopping Shears
- ▶ Pruning Saw



Why is pruning necessary?

- ▶ Shortening branches helps prevent breakage
- ▶ Pruning increases fruit size
- ▶ Controls the height of the tree
- ▶ Allows more light to go through the canopy
- ▶ Reduces the need of thinning the fruit as much
- ▶ Removing dead, diseased, or broken branches helps keep the tree healthy

When do you start pruning?

- ▶ Winter Dormancy
- ▶ Pruning at the right time of the year is very important, so fruit trees are best pruned in the winter when the trees are dormant
- ▶ The least desirable time is immediately after new growth develops in the spring

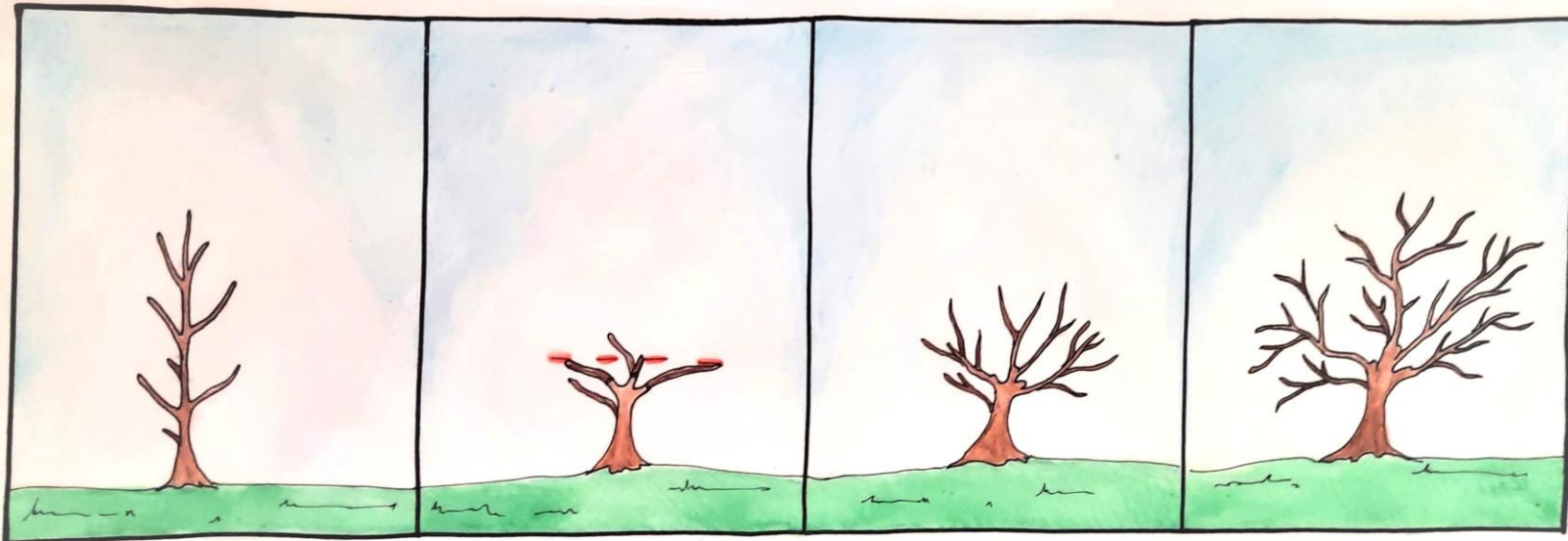
Pruning New Trees

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4



Keep 4-6 main branches

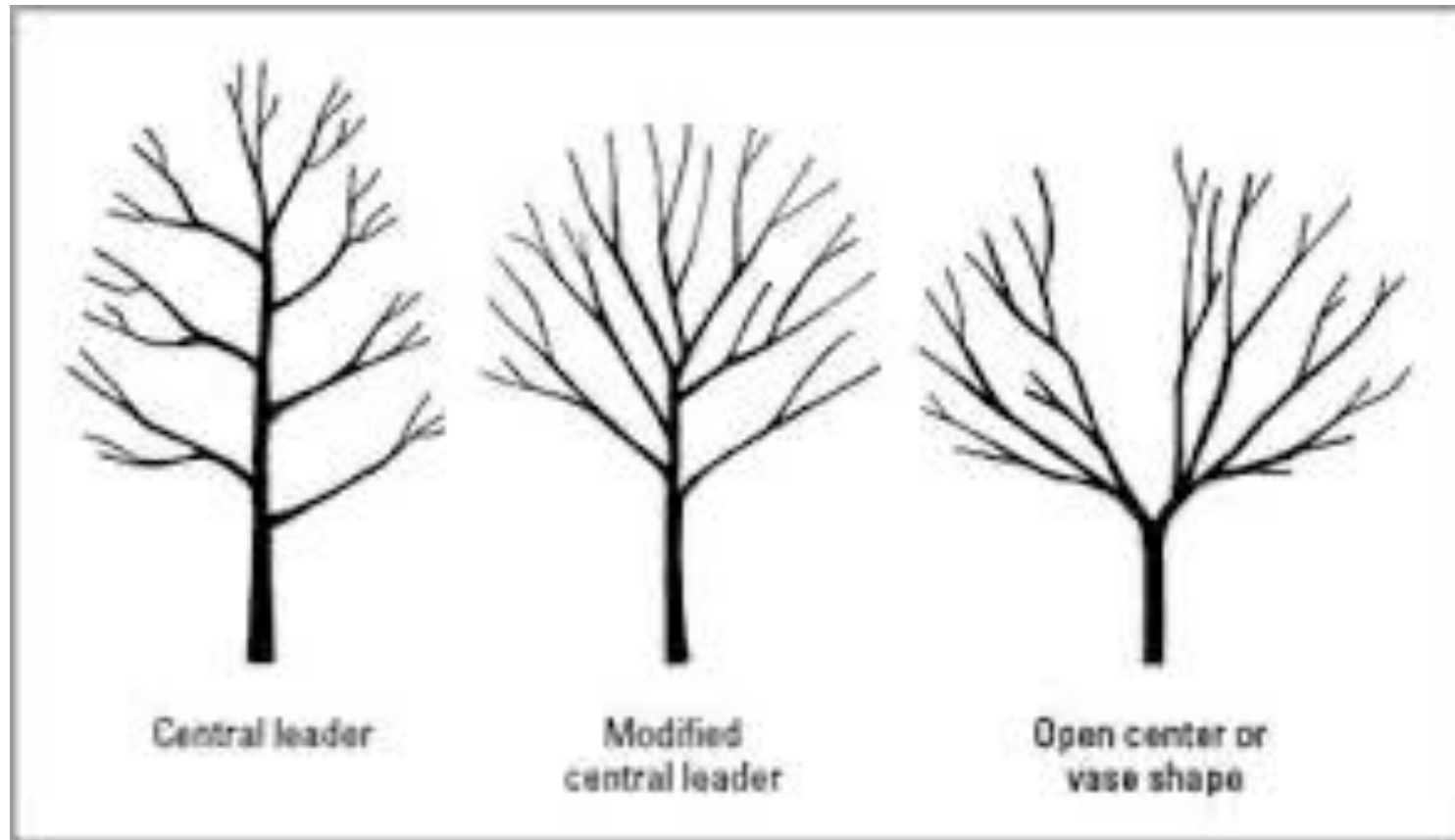
Main reasons why:

- better picking
- more shading

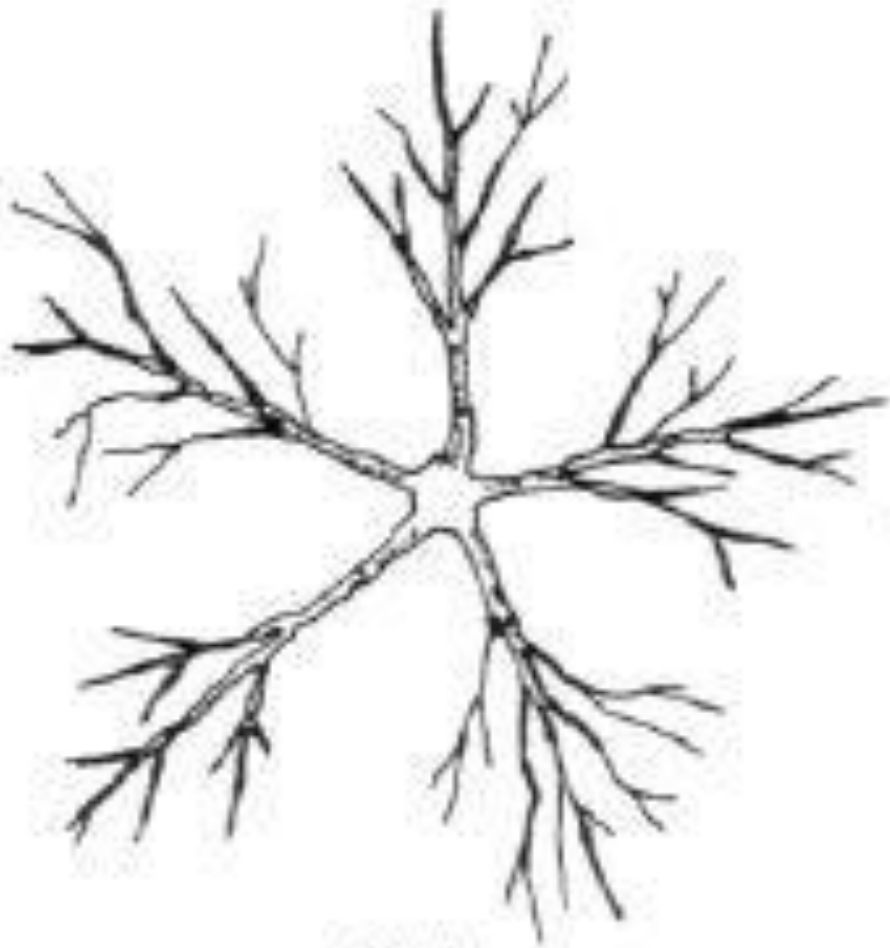
Pruning Fruit Trees

- ▶ Most of us are dealing with pome fruits (apples, pears and quince) or stone fruits (peaches, cherries, apricots, plums - anything with a pit)
- ▶ Start by pruning away any wood that is dead, damaged or diseased - a.k.a. the three D's
- ▶ First, remove any branches that grow downward, toward the center of the tree or that cross paths with another branch
- ▶ The goal is to have 4-6 evenly spaced branches for your main branches

Pruning Styles



Open Center Aerial Views



This



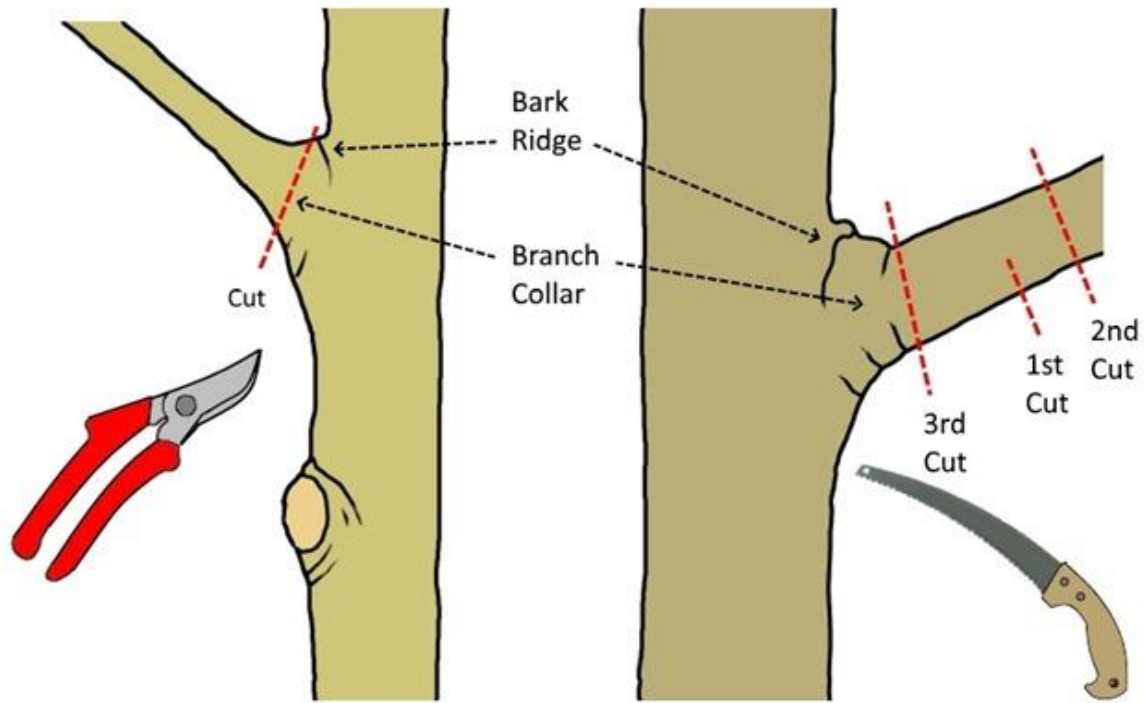
Not This

Two Main Cuts

- ▶ Branch removal
- ▶ Heading back cuts

Branch Removal

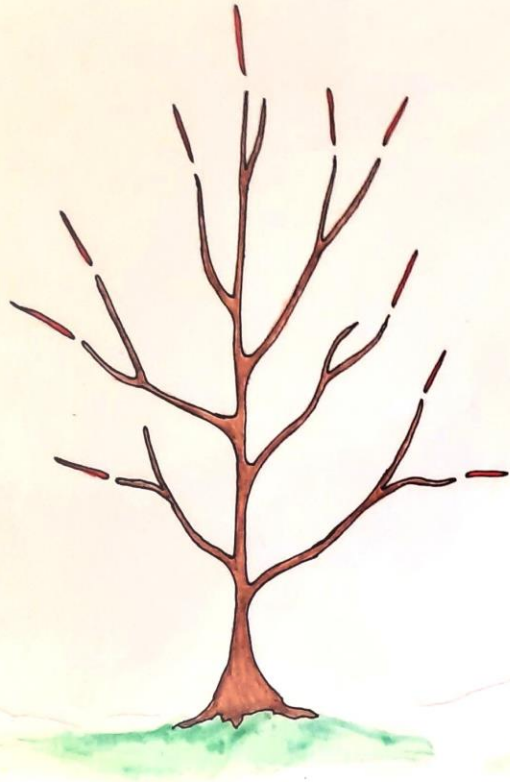
Pruning Off Branches Correctly - Don't Cut Into the Branch Collar



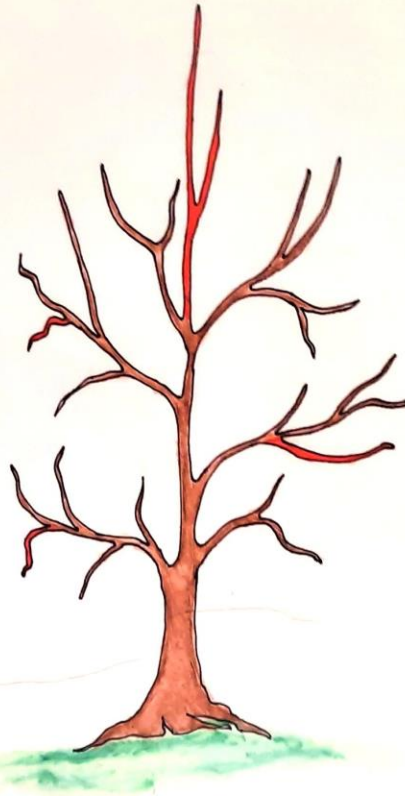
Removing a small branch with secateurs or loppers

Removing a thicker branch with a pruning saw

Heading vs Thinning

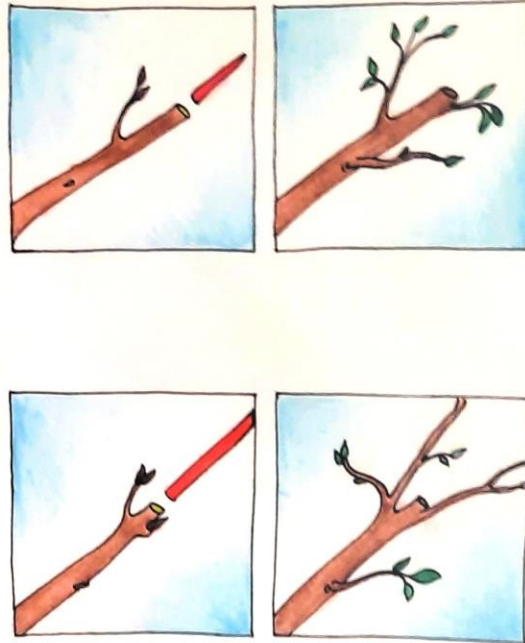


Heading cut - only the end of the shoot or branch is removed.

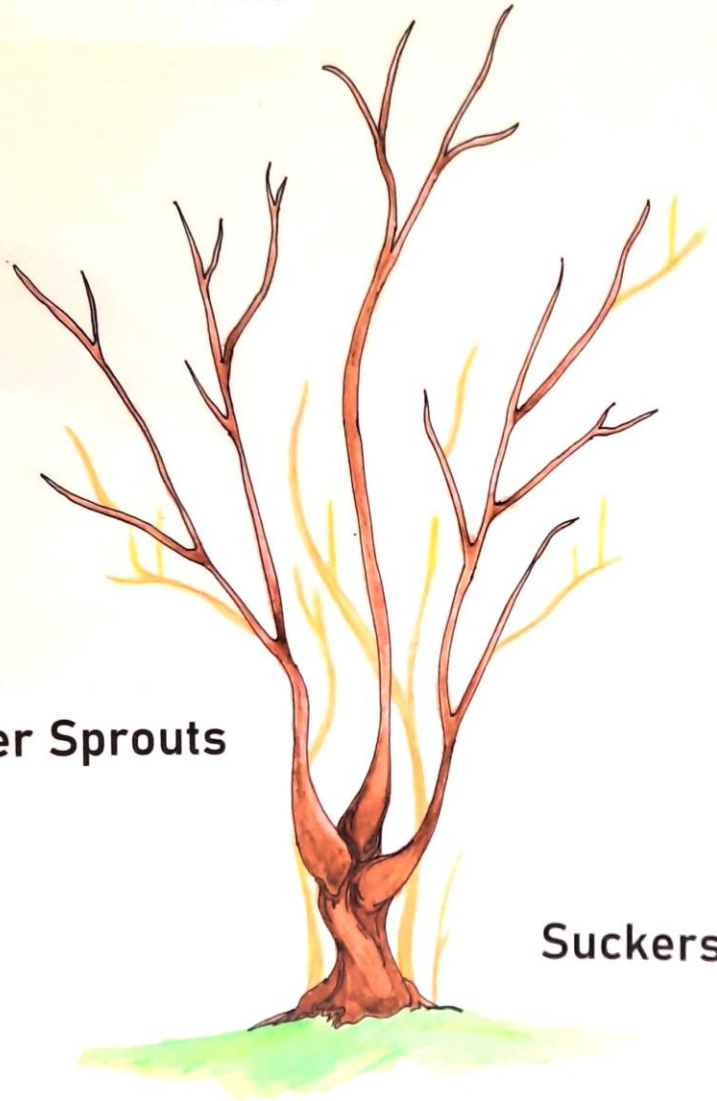


Thinning cut - the entire limb or shoot is removed.

Example:



What to Prune



Water Sprouts

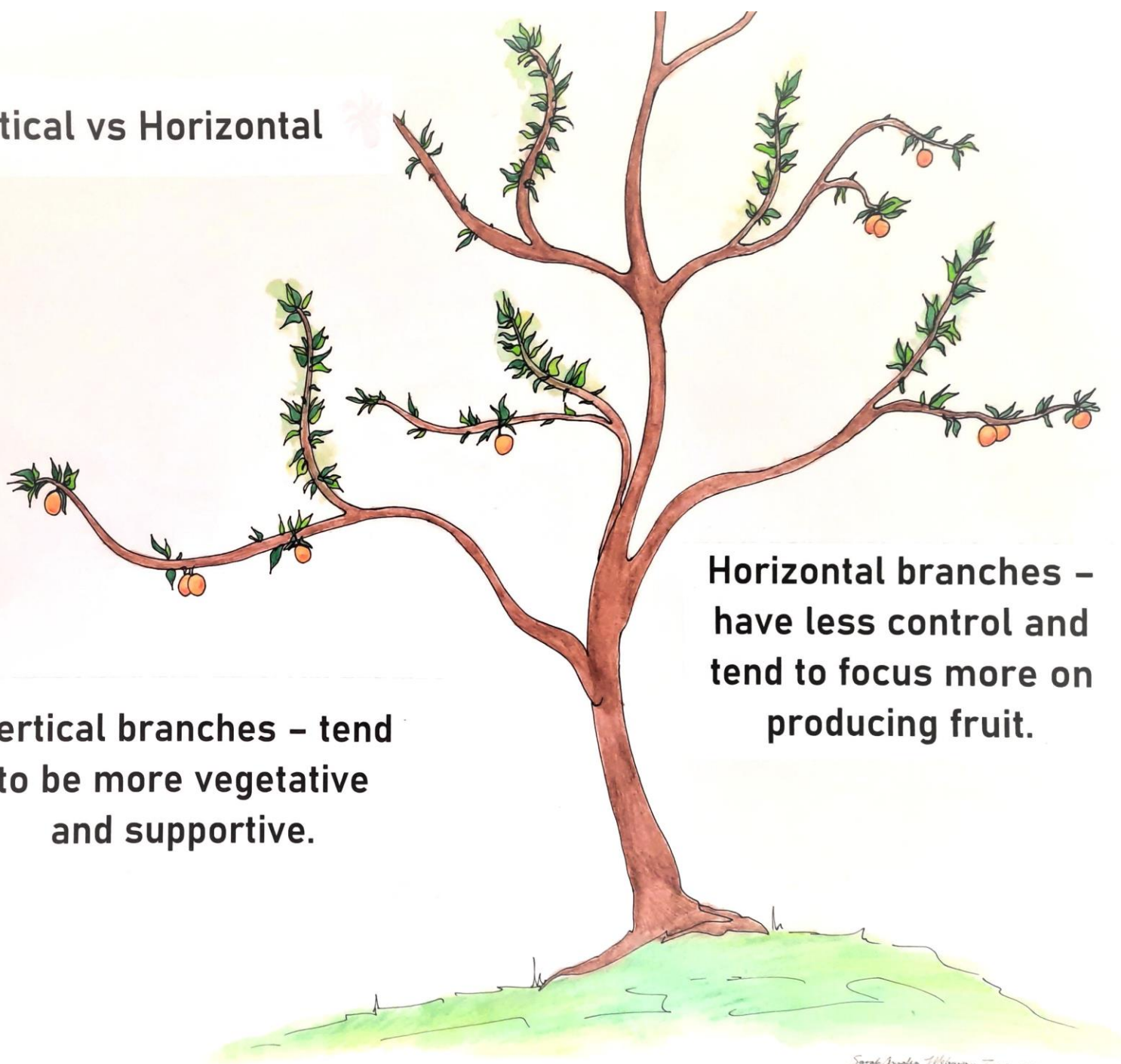
Suckers

Water sprouts – vertical shoots that develop on the trunk or branches of the tree.



Suckers – shoots that develop and grow from the roots or base of the tree.

Vertical vs Horizontal



Vertical branches – tend to be more vegetative and supportive.

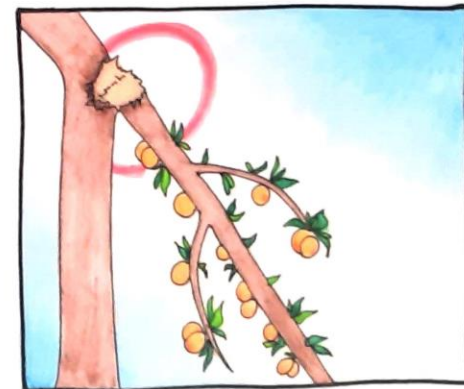
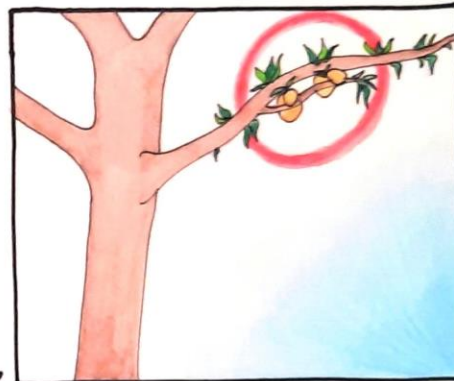
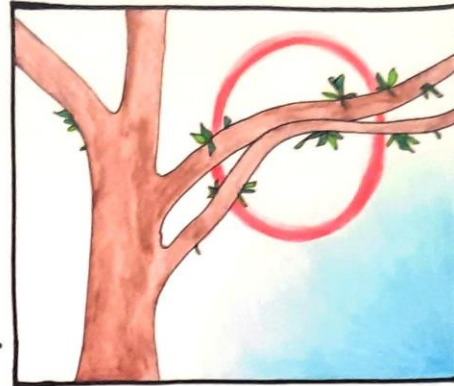
Horizontal branches – have less control and tend to focus more on producing fruit.

Envision the Future

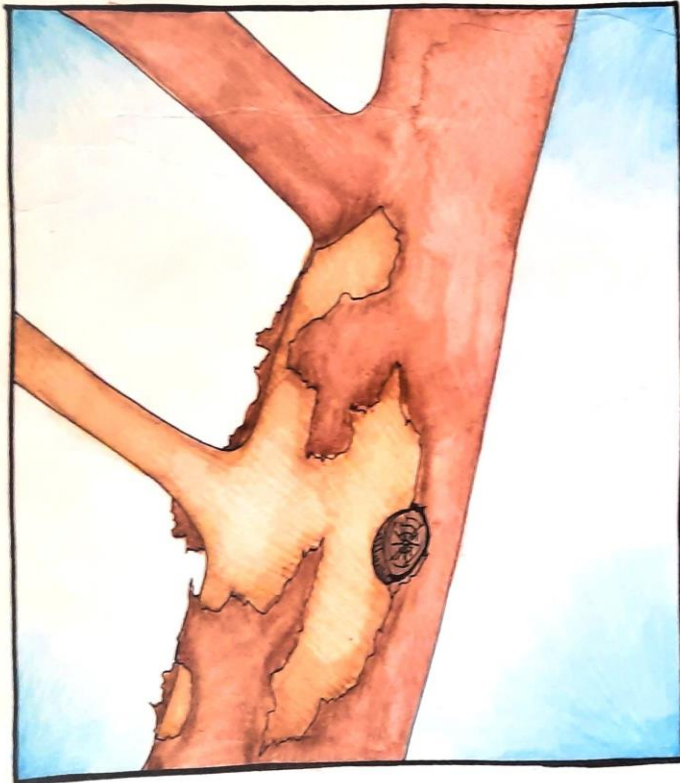
Keep about 10 inches
between branches.



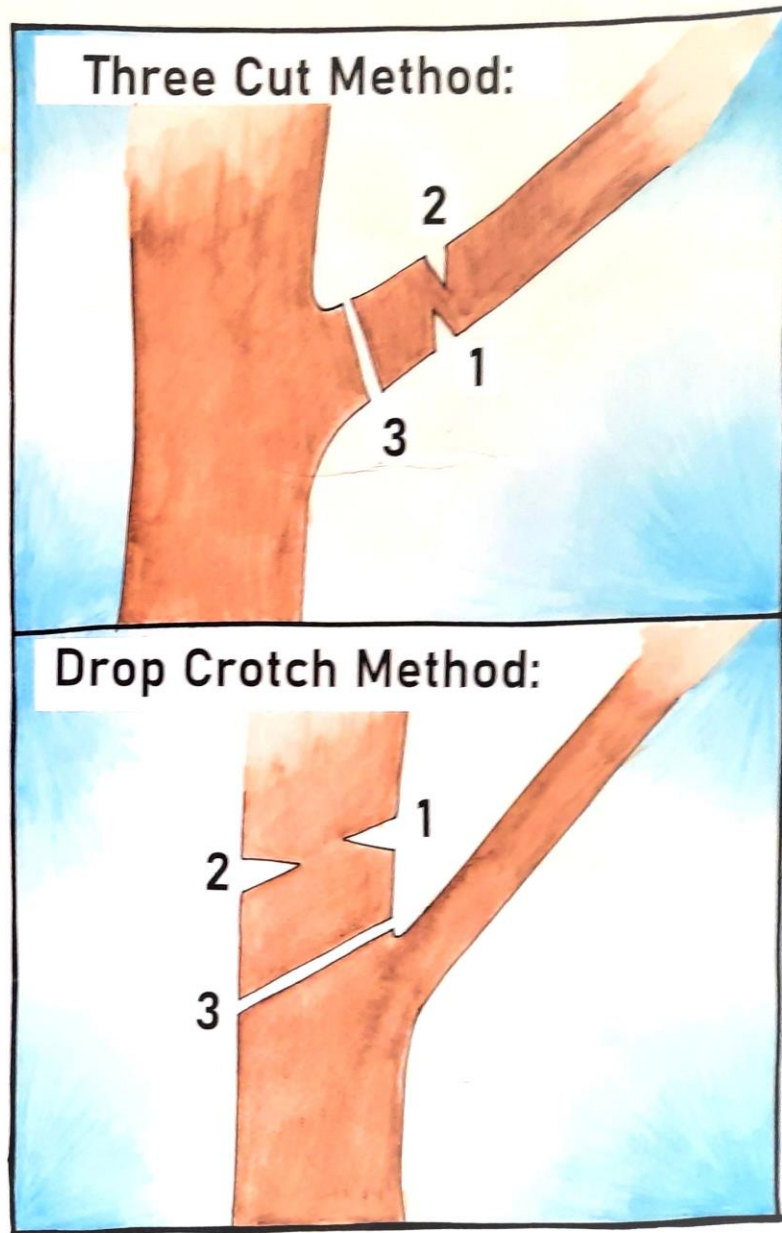
Branches due to
improper pruning.



Mature Limb Pruning



Damaged Limbs



Good Pruning Etiquette

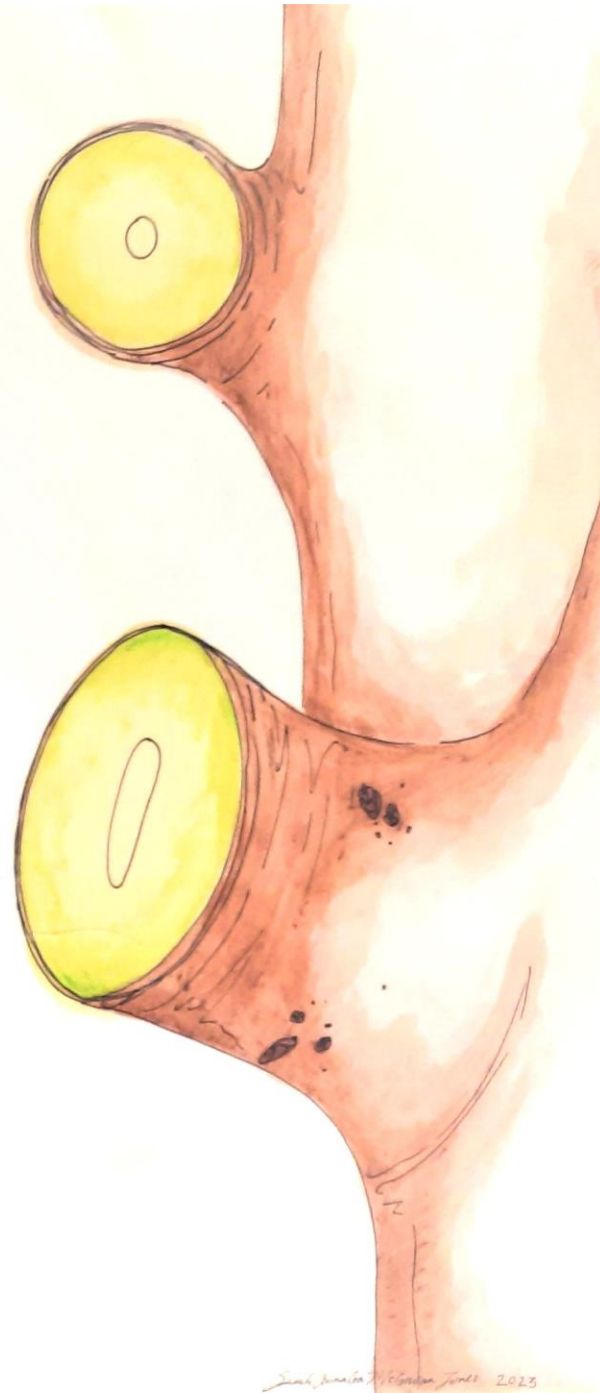
Correct

Correct

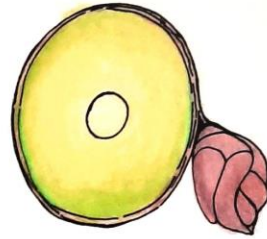
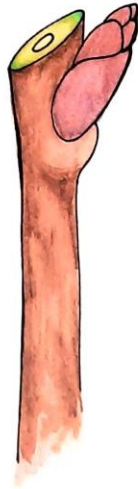
Incorrect

Incorrect

Pruning improves the quality and size of the tree and its fruit.

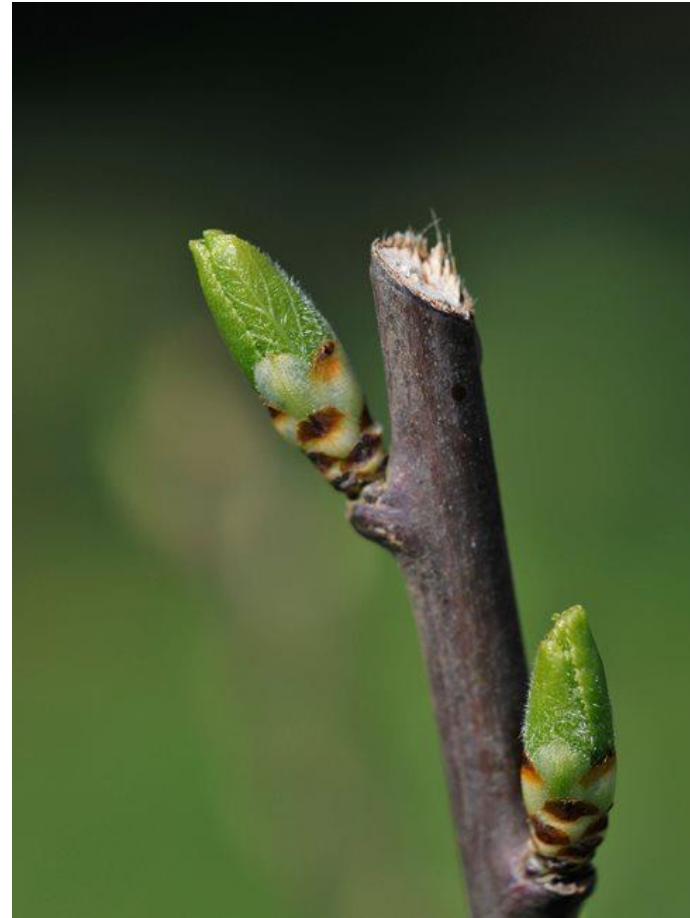


Good Pruning Etiquette



**Always better to prune
small young branches
than to wait and prune
mature large branches.**

Heading Back Cut





Peach Tree Pruning

Pre-pruned, water sprouts



Peach Tree Pruning Cont.

Tree after water sprouts are removed



Peach Tree Pruning cont.

Thinning cuts



Peach Tree Pruning Cont.

Heading back and branch
spacing



Peach Tree Pruning Cont.

Final look at finished pruned
peach tree



Pomegranate Pruning

First remove unwanted water
sprouts



Pomegranate Pruning Cont.

Thinning cuts to remove crowding



Pomegranate Pruning cont.

Final look at pruned
pomegranate



Pruning Young Fruit Trees

- ▶ First year allow the tree to grow without pruning
- ▶ Next year cut off the main leader
- ▶ Establish the main branches



Pruning Young Trees

- ▶ Showing major branches
- ▶ Cut off the extra leader
- ▶ Wrap the tree trunk to avoid sun burn



Pruning Young Fruit trees cont.

- ▶ Aerial view of major branches
- ▶ Main branches usually 4 to 6 branches evenly spaced

Tree wrap or Paint



Spring Gardening Tips



- ▶ If you are planting in the spring, soil temperature is key
- ▶ Floating row covers are helpful for avoiding frost and slowing down the wind
- ▶ Putting mulch over the soil helps weed prevention and keeps the soil surface from drying out

Fertilizer Information



- ▶ Fertilizer is placed before you plant the seed(s)
- ▶ A balanced fertilizer with even numbers works well in most gardens when incorporated pre-planting

Gilcrease
ORCHARD



Thank You
For
Learning!!!