

## Pruning Time – Just Do It!

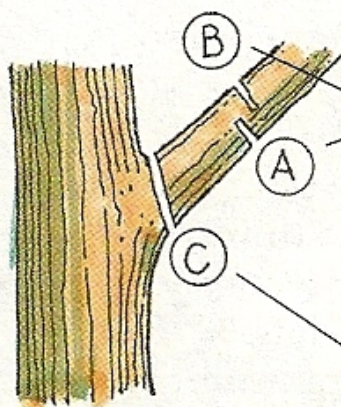
Friday, March 4th, 2011

Well, it's time to get after those pruning chores you have lined up for the spring. The tools are ready (sharp, located, etc.), safety items are on hand (safety glasses, gloves, etc.), and you have the priority branches, limbs, etc. identified. So, about all that is left is to "get er done." Remember to make the cuts properly if you do the work yourself.

## How to Make a Pruning Cut

### Pruning Large Limbs:

Large, heavy limbs could tear loose during pruning, stripping bark and creating jagged edges that invite insects and disease. That won't happen if you follow these steps.



Cut part way through the branch from beneath.

Make a second cut on the top of the branch, several inches out from the first cut. This will allow the limb to fall and be safely removed.

Make a final cut next to the trunk, just outside the branch collar, with the lower edge farther away from the trunk than at the top.

### Pruning Smaller Branches:

Smaller branches should be cut just beyond a lateral bud or another small lateral branch. The ideal cut is sharp and clean, and made on a slight angle.



Correct  
Pruning  
Cut



Too  
Close



Too  
Long



Too  
Slanted

Be careful who you hire to do the work:



*Hiring just anyone who shows up at your door may result in fatal damage to your trees. It's best to go with a qualified professional arborist.*

—National Arbor Day Foundation illustration

Don't over prune:

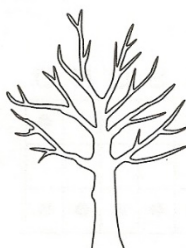
### Don't Overprune

It is best to remove only a small percentage of the live part of a tree at one time---a maximum of 25 percent in one year for healthy, vigorous trees. This will help maintain a balance between leaf area and other tree functions. Prune weak or declining trees less. Severe pruning may stimulate undesirable sprouting from the stem or roots. Avoid pruning over 25 percent of the live crown of any tree two years in succession.

### YES



Plan pruning work in advance



Remove up to 25% of crown for healthy tree

### NO



Heavy pruning should be done over several seasons



Topping is very harmful to trees. DON'T DO IT!



And, last, but not least:

**EXPERTS AGREE**

**DON'T**  
**TOP YOUR**  
**TREE**

Happy pruning!

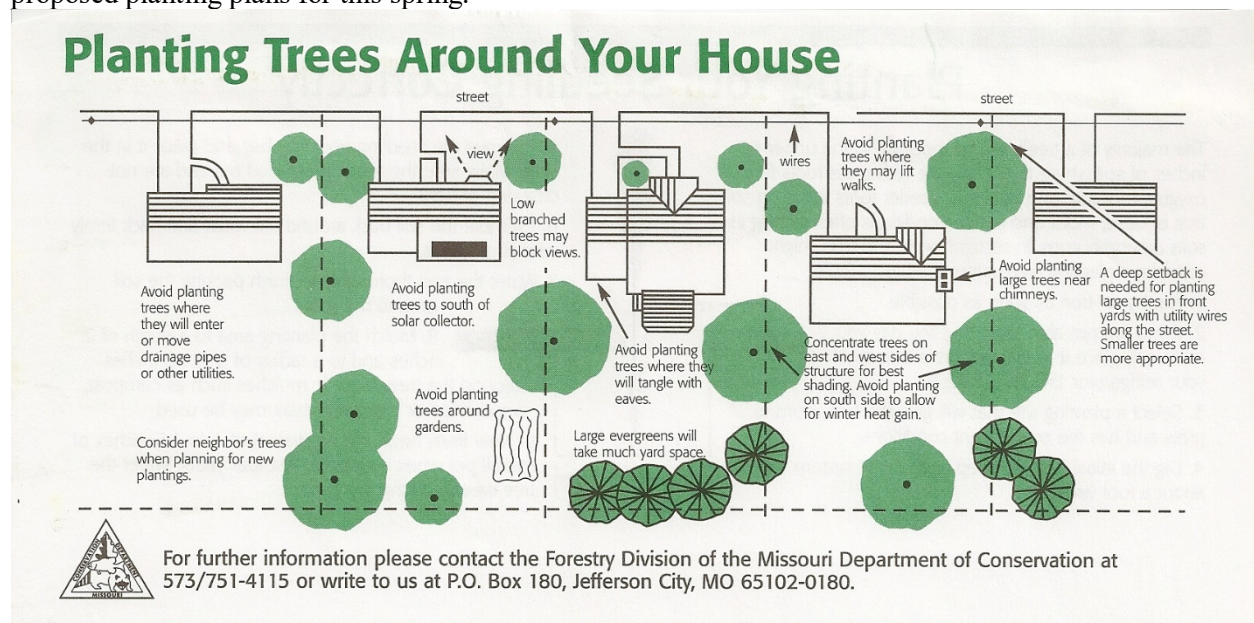
## Planting The Right Tree In The Right Place

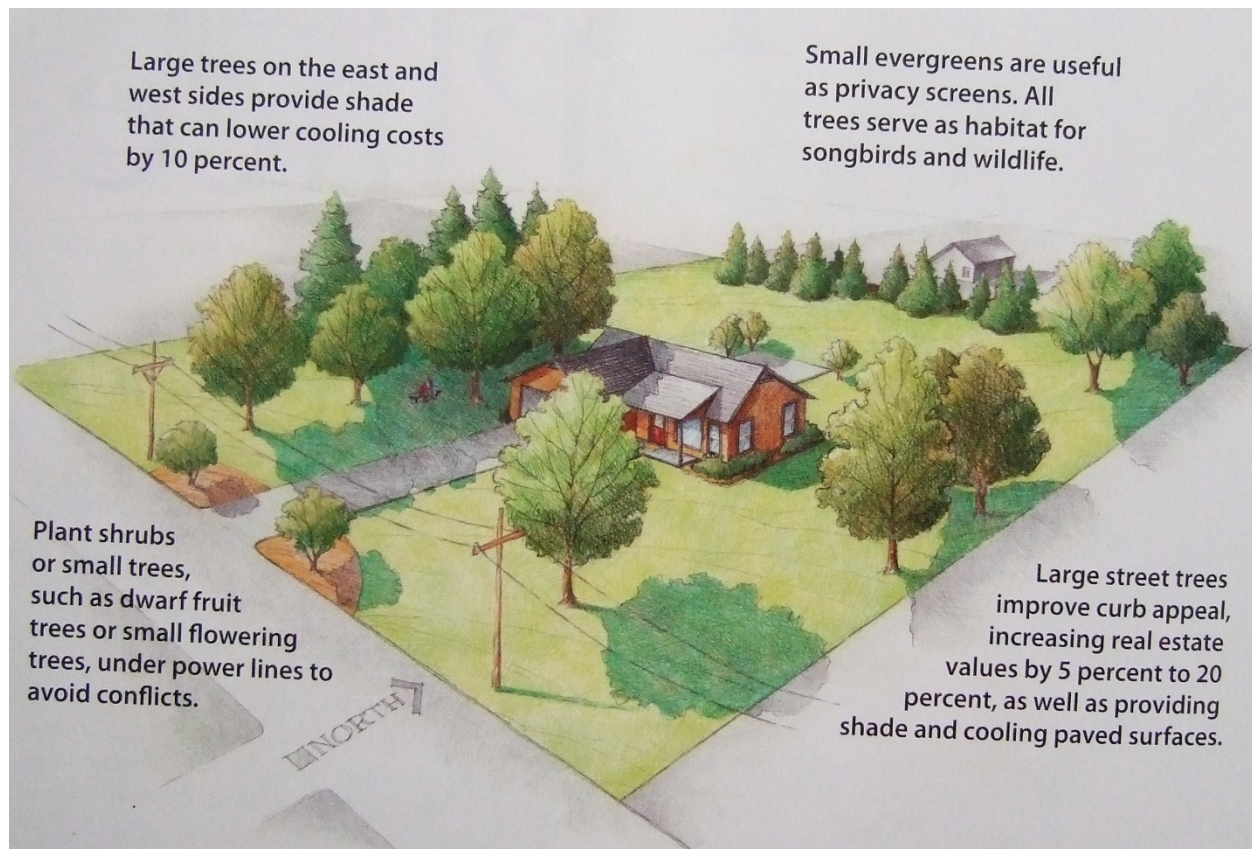
Saturday, March 19th, 2011

One of the basic tenets of successful care and management of trees in urban/suburban situations is to assure (as best you can) that the right tree is planted in the right place. This basic act assures that the tree has all the advantages for growth and development that the location can provide. Plus, it greatly reduces the cost and aggravation for the property owner as they deal with the routine maintenance activities through the years. A tree out of place can become a nuisance (and perhaps a liability) that becomes more difficult and expensive to deal with, especially as it increases in size.

There is lots of information available to assist homeowners in determining what the “right” tree is for their planting project; starting with species selection and ending with properly planting the tree itself. Much of this information has been presented in previous entries at this site. However, it never hurts to post reminders, because this subject is **so very important**.

Presented below are two diagrams gleaned from Missouri Department of Conservation publications which outline basic guidelines concerning the selection of the right kinds of trees (not species) for locations around a home. Later, I'll get into species selection and other aspects of Right Tree Right Place, but I urge you to study these stylized diagrams and try to envision how they might have application to your proposed planting plans for this spring.





## What Should I Plant?

Sunday, March 27th, 2011

"OK! OK! I get it! I should plant the right tree in the right place. You've convinced me to select trees to fit the spaces available, and to accomplish the function(s) I'd like to see happen. But.....just what are the right species to reach my objective(s)?" This is, of course, the most legitimate next question that comes to the mind of anyone following the entries in this series of blogs.

There are a myriad of tree species available from various sources such as nurseries, lawn and garden centers, discount houses, and grocery stores. Naturally, a wide range of prices exist because of these diverse sources. In general, the best sources of quality stocks are found at nurseries and lawn and garden centers, and the lesser quality stocks are found at the seasonal lawn and garden displays found at discount stores and grocery stores' parking lots. However, there are exceptions to this rule, and quality stock can be found anywhere depending on how it has been grown and handled. Never buy anything that looks unhealthy or in damaged condition; especially if it is "on sale." There are several good guides available that describe how to identify good planting material.

Probably the best overall guide for selecting trees for urban plantings in Missouri is the booklet, "Missouri Urban Trees" which is published by the Missouri Department of Conservation. I recommend it highly, and it is available free of charge from the Forestry Division, MDC, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, or through the Departments website at [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov). Regional MDC offices plus most other local work unit offices also have the booklet available for distribution, so check them out if you live nearby.





# MISSOURI URBAN TREES

Missouri Department of Conservation



The booklet has just about all the information you will need to decide which tree species will be best for your personal situation; which I obviously can't do in a blog entry. Check it out. One of the best sections of the treatise is the listing of trees **that should be avoided, and why they should be avoided.** Very useful information. Here is a simple listing of these species:

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| green and white ash           | European white birch   |
| boxelder                      | northern catalpa       |
| black cherry                  | Siberian (Chinese) elm |
| common hackberry              | hickory                |
| black locust                  | silver maple           |
| mimosa                        | mountainash            |
| white and red mulberry        | pin oak                |
| shingle oak                   | Russian olive          |
| Osage orange                  | paw paw                |
| callery pears (esp. Bradford) | persimmon              |
| Austrian pine                 | Scotch pine            |
| cottonwood                    | Lombardy poplar        |
| Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus)    | black walnut           |
| willows (esp. weeping)        |                        |
| Interesting stuff here.       |                        |