



TREE CARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
ESTABLISHED 1938

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***For immediate release***

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## Tree Pruning with a Purpose

Fall is a great time to be outside in our landscapes and gardens. We take stock of which plants are looking good and which plants seem to need a little help. It is natural to want to “do” something to help a tree – prune it, fertilize it, polish it – we can’t help wanting to touch it in some way.

Pruning is an oft needed maintenance treatment for good tree health, and to keep your tree and yard safe and looking good, but pruning without a good reason is not good tree care practice. Pruning just because your neighbor is doing it may not be beneficial for the tree, and could result in too much live tree tissue being removed. This can cause the tree to become stressed, and perhaps decline.

In fact, industry tree pruning standards (ANSI A300) say no more than 25 percent of a tree’s foliage should be removed in a single season, and if the tree cannot tolerate a lot of pruning, even less should be removed. When determining how much pruning your tree can tolerate, an arborist may consider if the tree:

- is healthy
- is still growing rapidly or has matured and slowed its growth
- had its roots severed or damaged recently or in the past
- suffers from disease
- is a species tolerant of heavy pruning

“All that said, fall is a good time to prune to meet certain tree growth goals,” says Tchukki Andersen, BCMA, CTSP\* and staff arborist with the Tree Care Industry Association.

A good arborist will work with you to set an objective for the pruning job (i.e., what you want accomplished when the work is done). Pruning objectives usually include one or more of the following:

- reduce risk of damage to people or property
- manage tree health and direction of growth
- provide clearance for vehicles or roadways
- improve tree structure
- increase or improve aesthetics
- restore shape

“Once tree pruning objectives are established, the arborist can provide specific details on how your trees could be pruned to get the desired result,” says Andersen.

The pruning process can be overwhelming to those not familiar with shade and ornamental tree pruning. A qualified tree care expert trained in tree and woody plant health care can answer your questions, as well as help you with your tree pruning goals. Make sure to ask for tree pruning to be done according to ANSI A300 standards, the generally accepted industry standards for tree care practices.

### Find a professional

A professional arborist can assess your landscape and work with you to determine the best trees and shrubs to plant for your existing

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*Editors: If you would like additional information or digital photos, please contact [atetreault@tcia.org](mailto:atetreault@tcia.org)*

*TCIA arborists, safety and business professionals are also available as sources for tree related articles and issues:  
1-800-733-2622 or [tandersen@tcia.org](mailto:tandersen@tcia.org).*

landscape. Contact the Tree Care Industry Association, a public and professional resource on trees and arboriculture since 1938. It has more than 2,200 member companies who recognize stringent safety and performance standards and who are required to carry liability insurance. TCIA has the nation's only Accreditation program that helps consumers find tree care companies that have been inspected and accredited based on: adherence to industry standards for quality and safety; maintenance of trained, professional staff; and dedication to ethics and quality in business practices. An easy way to find a tree care service provider in your area is to use the "Locate Your Local TCIA Member Companies" program. You can use this service by calling 1-800-733-2622 or by doing a ZIP Code search on [www.treecaretips.org](http://www.treecaretips.org).

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