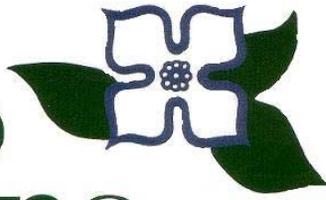


Surry Gardens



PRUNING CONIFERS

When planting conifers choose the right species for the location. Pay attention to the tree's growth habit as well as the mature size. As a group, most conifers do not need pruning.

If a conifer has outgrown its location there are two options. You may elect to remove the plant and replace it with another better suited to the site. The second option is to prune. However, conifers vary in their tolerance to severe pruning. Know your tree before starting to cut, and have a carefully considered plan.

Conifers exhibit one of two branching habits; random or whorled. Randomly branched conifers, such as junipers and yews, are more tolerant of severe pruning. These plants grow in spurts throughout the season and have buds along their stems. They will resprout from old wood. Plants with whorled branching, such as pines and spruce, have branches that are at regular intervals along their trunks and stems. These are less tolerant of drastic pruning; they lack latent buds on their trunk and stems, and will not sprout from old wood.

The best time to prune is before growth starts in the spring. The quickest way to prune a tree that sprouts from old wood is to drastically cut the plant back, treat it as a young tree, establish a new leader, and wait for the tree to fill in. Another option is to decrease the size gradually, allowing the older growth to hide the cuts. Abandon the pruning if there is no new growth. Consider changing the shape of the plant rather than its height. For example, pruning away the lower limbs of a conifer may open up a desired view while keeping the mature tree.

PRUNING TOLERANCES

Randomly Branched Conifers

Very Tolerant of Pruning.....	Taxus (Yews)
Tolerant of Pruning.....	Juniperus horizontalis, Juniperus occidentalis, Juniperus virginiana, Thuja, Tsuga
Less Tolerant of Pruning.....	Chamaecyparis, other Junipers

Whorled Branched Conifers

Somewhat Tolerant of Pruning...	Picea, Pinus
Not tolerant of Pruning.....	Sciadopitys

