Almonds. 8 Basics of Pruning

Info sheet

What is Pruning?

Pruning is the removal of unwanted growth (shoots, limbs and branches) and consequently the removal of leaf surface which dwarfs tree development

Why is Pruning Important?

The goal of pruning is to increase yields (and sometimes reduce diseases) by increasing air movement and light penetration into the crop canopy.

How do you Prune?

Use these 8 basics for pruning almond trees.

1. **Newly planted trees:** At planting, cut trees to a short stick (60 to 75 cm = 24 to 30 inches high). Cut any remaining side shoots to have just one top growing point.
2. **Young trees:** Prune young trees fairly heavily to encourage tree shape and rapid growth for the first 3 years without any fruit.

General pruning basics

3. Prune fruit trees when the plants are dormant (not actively growing).
4. When deciding which branch to cut and where to cut it, remember that topping a vertical branch encourages vegetative growth necessary for development of the tree and opens the tree to more sunlight.
5. Upright branches generally remain vegetative and vigorous. Horizontal branches generally are more fruitful. A good combination of the two is necessary, for fruiting now and in future years.
6. New growth occurs within 2 to 20 cm (1 to 8 inches) of where you cut the branch. The influence is not further down the plant.
7. Do most of the pruning in the top of the tree so that the lower branches are exposed to sunlight.
8. Make clean cuts within 1 cm (about ¼") of a bud; don't leave stubs beyond the bud.

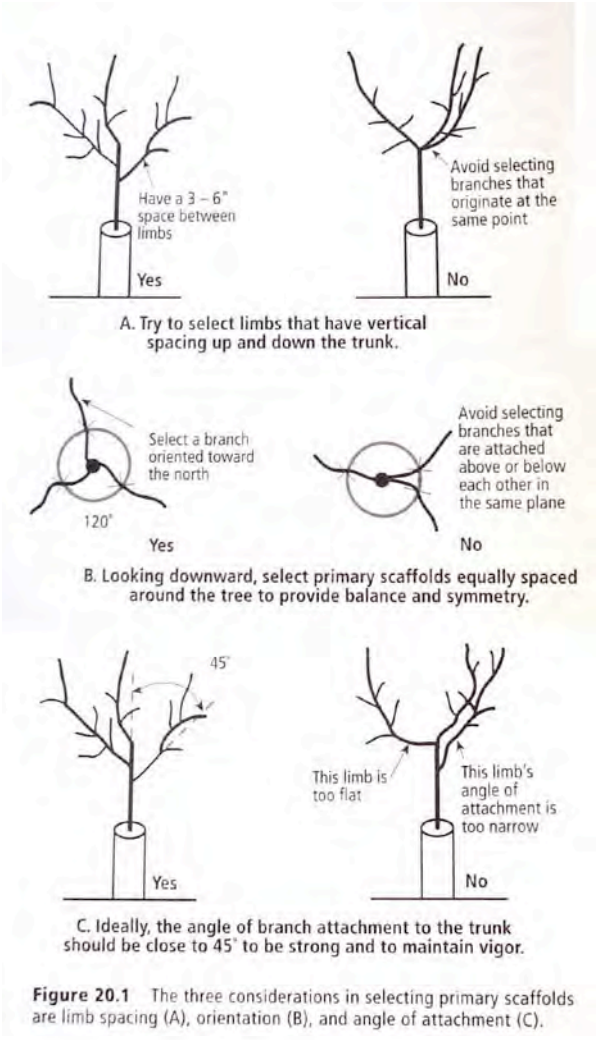
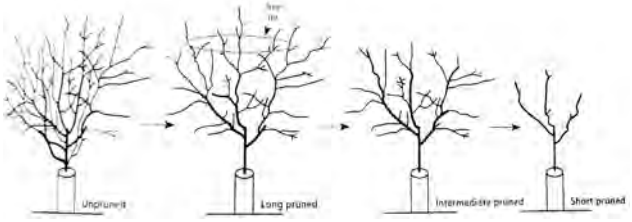


Figure 20.1 The three considerations in selecting primary scaffolds are limb spacing (A), orientation (B), and angle of attachment (C).



Prepared by Louise Ferguson, Corky Lovin, John Driver, Mark A Bell and Paul Marcotte

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