

Tree Pruning Basics – Guide for Bough Harvesting

Some Benefits to Pruning

- * Promotes the production of knot-free timber
- * Increased understory vegetation for wildlife
- * Reduces incidence of disease such as white pine blister rust
- * Improves visual aesthetics
- * Improves stand vigour by removing least productive lower branches

Pruning Technique

Before harvesting boughs, be sure to use the proper safety equipment such as hardhat, gloves and eye protection. When harvesting for boughs, ensure target trees are (greater than or equal to) ≥ 3 meters in height. Cut the branches parallel to the hole or the main stem as close as possible (less than or equal to) ≤ 2 centimetres, without significantly damaging the branch collar, as shown in **Figure 1**. Using this method will insure the quick healing over of the scars. Poor pruning technique, such as leaving long stubs (greater than) >2 centimetres, can increase the likelihood of being exposed to tree diseases and is **not** acceptable. Branches should be pruned using shears, loppers or pruning saws. Cutting branches with a chainsaw is **not** acceptable.

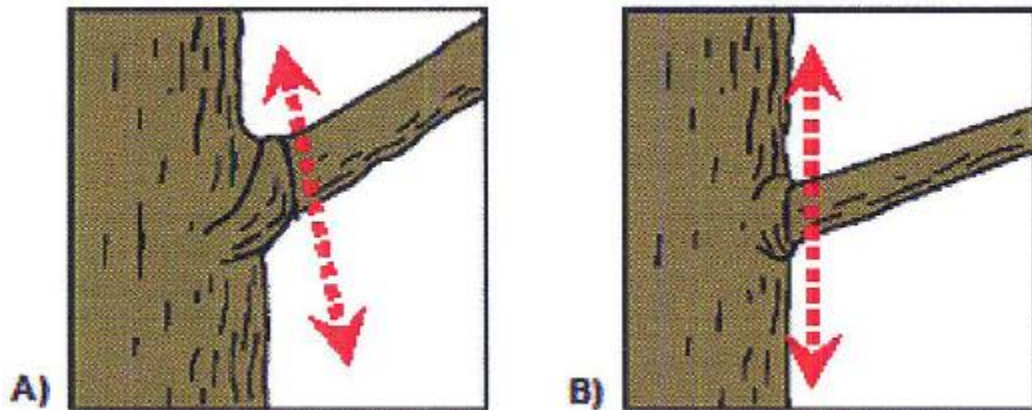


Figure 1: Proper pruning technique of a living branch from a target tree ≥ 3 meters in height, is to cut as close as possible to the branch collar without scaring the tree stem like example “A” or roughly parallel to the stem like example “B”.

Acceptable Pruning Practices

To maintain a viable and healthy stand of timber for future purposes such as recreation or timber harvesting, it is recommended that you only prune the lower 50% of live crown, as shown in **Figure 2**.

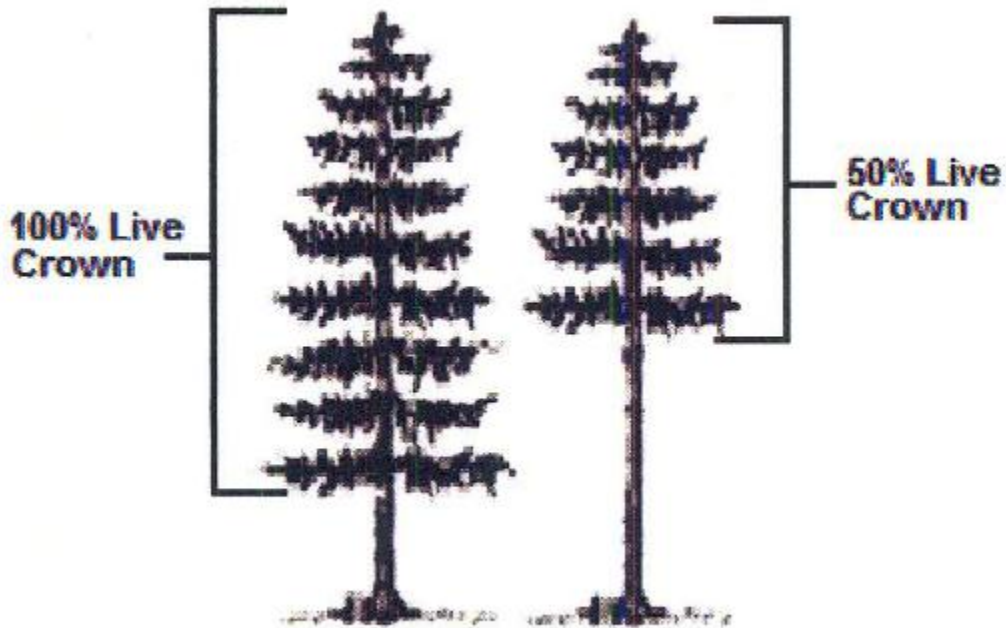


Figure 2

Prune correctly and don't leave long stubs or jagged cuts as shown in **Figure 3**. By leaving jagged cuts and long stems you increase the risk of injuring yourself and others working around, and you drive down the potential future wood quality of the stand. It's also encouraged that all bough harvesting be done along road right-of-ways, which will enhance the safety of road users by improving sight distances, and may also aid in future road maintenance activities.

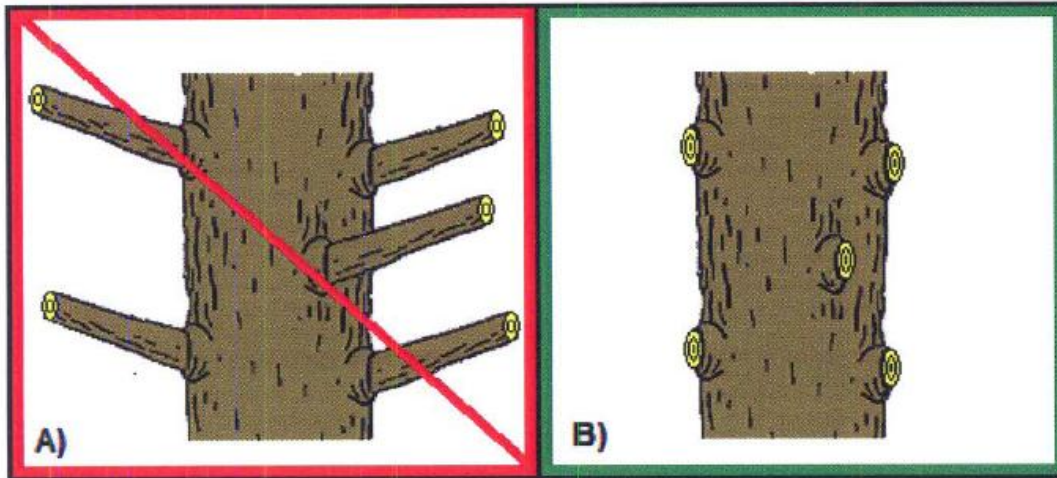


Figure 3: Leaving long jagged branches as shown in example “A” is unacceptable and an unsafe work practice which should be avoided. Maintain high quality standards by pruning close to the stem, as shown in example “B”.

Private property rights must be respected. It is the individual’s responsibility to ensure that they are not trespassing on private property, parks or other special management areas where cutting is prohibited. If found cutting boughs in any of these areas you may be subject to charges of theft or other criminal code offences.



Unacceptable Pruning

Branch stubs exceeding 2cm.
More than 50% of live crown has been removed.



Acceptable Pruning

Branches cut flush with branch collar. Less than 50% of the live Crown has been removed.