



Ministry of Forest and Range
Sunshine Coast Forest District

Tree Pruning Basics



Guide For Bough Harvesting



2006

Purpose

The purpose of this brochure is to promote best practices and provide appropriate techniques for harvesting tree boughs, as well to prevent damage to future crop trees.

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 vigor, by removing the least productive lower branches.

Pruning Technique

Before harvesting boughs, be sure to use the proper safety equipment listed below, and that they are in good working condition:

- Hardhat
- Gloves
- Eye Goggles

When harvesting for boughs, cut the branches parallel to the bole or the main stem, as close as possible ($\leq 2\text{cm}$), 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 techniques, such as leaving long stubs greater than 2cm, can increase the likelihood of being exposed to tree diseases.

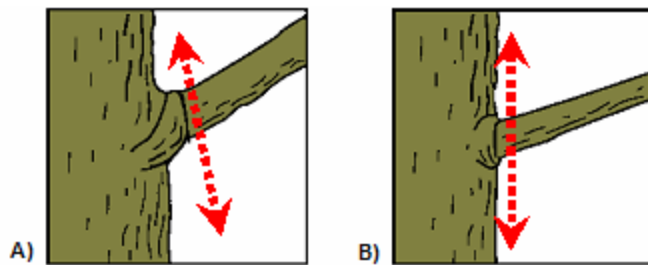
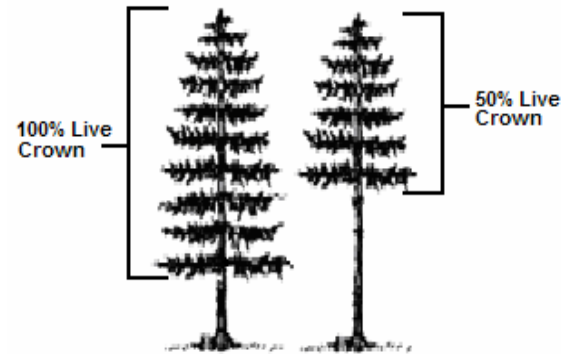


Figure 1: Proper pruning of a living branch is to cut as close as possible to the branch collar, like in example “A” or roughly parallel to the stem like example “B.”

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**.



Prune correctly, and don't leave long stubs or jagged cuts as shown in **figure 3**. By leaving jagged cuts and long stubs, you increase the chance of injuring yourself and others working around you, and drive down the potential future wood quality of the stand.

Poor field practices and extensive stand damage can result in a criminal record and administrative fines of up to \$10,000.

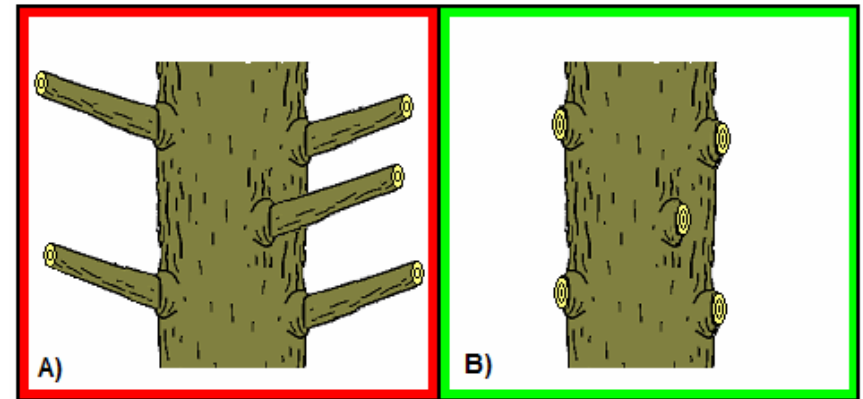


Figure 3: Leaving long jagged branches as shown in example “A,” is unacceptable and unsafe work practice, which should be avoided. Maintain high quality standards by pruning close to the stem, as show in example “B.”

Private Property rights must be respected. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not trespassing on private property or special management areas, which includes parks, where cutting is strictly prohibited.



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