

- Remove any other unwanted branches below those you have selected to keep.

Year 3 November -March

Side shoots will have developed from the 5/6 main branches you pruned last November

These now need pruning back as in year 2 -following these rules

- Remove dead or diseased wood
- Remove branches that are crossing or heading toward your nice open centre
- Shorten the secondary branches following the rules of year 2.

Only allow your young tree to ripen 2 or 3 fruits in its first three years. Any more than this are best picked off in early July.

This will complete the formative pruning of your tree. Maintenance pruning and pruning for fruit can then be undertaken in future years—quite often many trees never receive any further pruning!

If you would like to learn more, why not come to one of our Pruning Courses—informative and good fun! Do ask for details.

FORMATIVE PRUNING OF MAIDEN FRUIT TREES



Your young maiden fruit tree will need some formative pruning to achieve a well balanced, open vase shaped, fruitful tree

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Planting is best carried out between the months of October- May for container grown plants and between November -March for bareroot plants

Please read and carefully follow our leaflet '10 Tips to Successful Planting and Aftercare'

YOUR GOAL

With fruit trees aim to achieve an open , vase shaped head to your tree this will promote

- Good air circulation which in turn reduces pest and disease and encourages a good healthy tree
- Allows the penetration of plenty of light & sunlight to ripen the fruit and set buds for the following years fruit
- Encourage fruit formation where you want it

Pruning early in the dormant season (November) will give you the maximum reaction from the plant i.e. it will produce a lot of growth during the next growing season. Thus for a new tree and probably an impatient new owner November is the best time to do your formative pruning.

Follow the pruning plan as detailed over the next 3 years

Year 1—immediately after planting (1yr Maiden)

Prune the main stem of the young tree just above a bud at the following height



Pic. 1. One year old maiden tree with few if any side branches/feathers.

75-90cm (2¹/₂/3ft) for a BUSH shaped tree
120cm (4ft) for a HALF STANDARD shaped tree
150cm (5ft) for a STANDARD shaped tree

(note your chosen rootstock will partly determine what you can grow- do seek advice from us if you are not sure)

Pic. 1

This 'beheading' will change the hormonal balance of your tree and encourage side shoots to develop during the next growing season.

Year 2 November - March (2yr Maiden)

Look at all your new side branches and select up to 5 or 6 of the best spaced ones.

Prune each of these back using the following rules

- A vigorous shoot—prune only a little cutting off up to ¹/₃ of the last years growth
- A weaker shoot prune more heavily—cutting off up to ¹/₂ of the last years growth.

The rule being

Prune a little get a little. Prune a lot get a lot !!

- Prune back to an outward facing bud—this will be the direction of the new growth.



Pic. 2

Pic. 2. Two year old maiden tree with side branches/feathers