

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE SPECIFICATION

**TREE AND SHRUB PRUNING**

(Acre)

CODE 660

**GENERAL SPECIFICATION**

Procedures, technical details and other information listed below provide additional guidance for carrying out selected components. This material supplements the requirements and considerations listed in the conservation practice standard.

**DEFINITION**

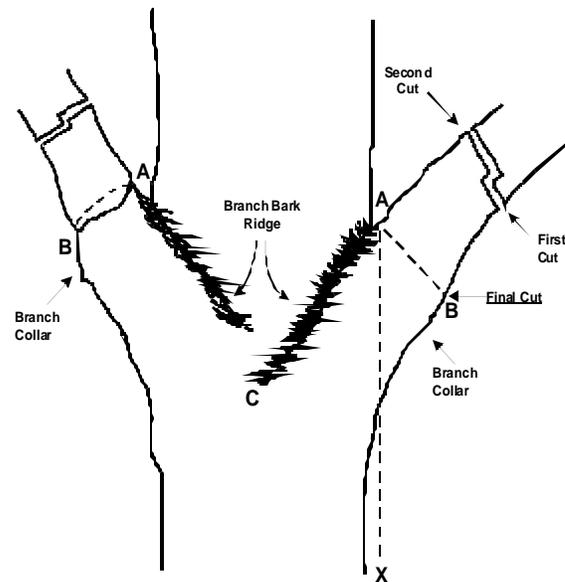
Removing all or parts of selected branches from trees and shrubs.

**General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes**

Prune trees according to the following steps:

1. Locate the branch bark ridge.
2. Find **A** (outside edge of branch bark ridge).
3. Find **B** (swelling where branch meets branch collar. If **B** is difficult to determine draw a perpendicular line from **A**: the angle **XAC** is equal to the angle **XAB** (See FIGURE 1). Stub the branch to be pruned using a first cut from below and a second cut from above.
4. Make the final cut on line **AB**.
5. Do not cut behind the branch bark ridge.
6. Do not leave stubs.
7. Do not cut into the branch collar.

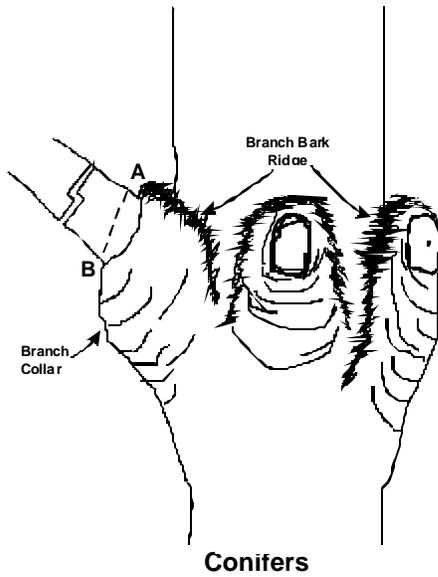
Timing of shearing, branch removal and corrective pruning of high value tree species will be described to accomplish the intended purpose.



**Hardwoods**  
FIGURE 1. — Hardwood pruning

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

**SPECIFICATION -660-2**



**Conifers**  
**FIGURE 2. — Conifer pruning**

Use any appropriate, properly sharpened and maintained pruning tools including pruning shears, loppers, pole saws, bow saws, and chain saws. The preferred tools for small and medium sized limbs are loppers, pruning shears, or a hand or pole saw with a curved blade that cuts on the down stroke.

Avoid pruning when tree/shrub is actively growing except for spring flowering shrubs.

Do not remove over one-third of the live crown in any one application.

It is not necessary to paint or treat pruning cuts.