How to write your own pruning rules

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AgFirst
Why have pruning rules?
Pruning can be easy?
Why have rules?

• Takes time to develop skill
• Require consistent job
  • Between trees
  • Between rows
  • Between varieties
• Increase productivity
• Less errors, more speed, more confidence
• Easier to achieve – aim for 95% success
• Reduces confusion
• Better retained by staff
How to make rules memorable

• Fewer rules are easier to remember
• Bigger picture not always needed
• Catchy phrases stick
60% pruning is to remove annual shoots
Branches holding hands
Prune between trees
Lazy pruning - big cut first
Long pruning – plenty buds
One saw cut
#1 Pruning rule

Must have Buds:
- always count to bring back on track
- & to keep on track

*Fruiting business, not the firewood business*
Grey wood – plenty of buds
Too few buds

Better
Annual wood is future replacement – Not enough buds on grey wood
Only 3 buds

Too much fruiting wood removed

Count buds
# Orchardnet-Pruning Plan

## Winter Pruning Report

**Season Ending 2013**

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<th>Ssn</th>
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<th>TCA Harvested Fruit /TCA</th>
<th>Buds/Fruit</th>
<th>Target Buds/Tree post-prune</th>
<th>Monitor Buds/Tree</th>
<th>Actual Buds/Tree post-prune</th>
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Examples

Pruning rules for a calm intensively planted spindle orchard (2850 trees/ha) : Jazz

1. Cut out 3 strongest branches (targeting 19 left in tree)
2. Cut out all 12 and 6 o’clock shoots
3. Make all branches long and skinny
   (remove side wood longer than secateurs) -Don’t cut if no buds
4. Paint all cuts on trunk
Pruning rules for Gala tree planted on vigorous rootstock

Bottom tier

1. Cut out all 12 and 6 o’clock shoots
2. Keep fruiting wood in one layer
3. Cut one big side branch per quarter
4. Space grey wood to secateurs
5. No shortening
Pruning rules for Gala tree planted on vigorous rootstock

Tops

1. Cut out all shoots on trunk up to 1.0 metres above bottom tier
2. Cut out 2 largest branches,
3. Cut out all 12 and 6 o’clock shoots
4. Remove 2/3 of all annual shoots from the top trunk (spiral space up and around trunk)
5. Cut out 50% of biggest side branches (aim to make branches skinny and pointing at the ground) don’t cut if no buds left.
Consistent flowering