Proper pruning will help keep your plants healthy and within the size limits you desire. You should prune for three reasons: to train and redirect growth, to maintain their health by removing damaged, dead, diseased or weak parts, and to increase the quality or quantity of fruit or flowers.

Trees - deciduous and fruiting:
- Remove dead, diseased, damaged, crossing branches, suckers, and water sprouts anytime
- Prune for form during dormancy (late fall to early spring)
- Make the largest cuts first and the smallest ones last.
- Do not top a tree by removing the leader; it will produce unbalanced growth (excluding fruit trees)
- Do not remove more than 25 percent of the foliage limbs in any one season.
- To prune heavy tree limbs, make your cuts in three stages:
  - First cut halfway thru the underside of the branch two feet from the trunk
  - Second cut on the top, just to the inside of the bottom cut, to remove the limb
  - Final cut to remove the branch stub should be flush with the branch collar (swollen area between the main trunk and branch that accelerates the healing process).

Shrubs - deciduous and fruiting:
- Try to make selective pruning cuts instead of shearing the entire shrub
- Start by removing damaged, dead, diseased, crossing branches, and long shoots that ruin the shape of the plant anytime
- Spring blooming shrubs, such as Forsythia, should be pruned immediately after blooming.
- Summer and fall blooming shrubs are pruned in early spring down to the new flush of growth
- Remove up to 30-50% of its size each year
- Rejuvenate by pruning one third of the oldest branches down to the ground
- Refrain from shearing unless you are deadheading or disbudding.

Evergreens – non-flowering trees and shrubs (Arborvitae, Holly and Juniper):
- The best time to prune is late spring into early summer when the new growth is still soft
- Pinch Spruce and Pine “candle” growth late spring, removing half the candles or branch tips
- Shearing evergreens into a formal shape will result in having to maintain the shearing each year

Perennials:
- Deadhead regularly by removing the spent flower and its stem back to a bud or leaf node
- Remove all yellow/dead foliage and stems late fall or early spring down to new basal growth
- Thin out heavy stems to increase air circulation and reduce disease
- Disbud (pinch or cut up to 6” off tips) fall bloomers such as Sedum, Asters, and fall mums until the 4th of July

Annuals:
- Deadhead as needed through summer; this will promote more blooming and better branching resulting in a fuller, compact plant