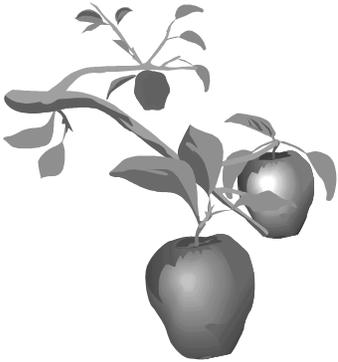




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FRUIT TREE TIPS



Growing apple and other fruit trees at home provides tasty, fresh fruit for the family consumption. One can also have cultivars that may not be available at the local grocery store. A well-established and maintained apple orchard also enhances the appearance of the home landscape as specimen, border, and espaliered, or trellised plants, while producing food for the family. However, there is more to growing fruit than the trees and harvesting the crop. Without sufficient and proper care for apple trees, fruit quality will be quite poor. Here are a few tips to help you on your way!

Where to plant my apple trees: Apple trees need full sun for proper growth and quality fruit production. The early morning sun is particularly important since it dries the dew from the leaves, thereby reducing the onset of diseases. Apple planting sites should have good air circulation. They grow well in a wide range of soil types. Ideal pH is near 6.5.

Why do my apple trees fail to produce fruits? Lack of time to reach bearing age, lack of compatible pollinating cultivars, absence of honeybees or bumblebees, attack by insects and diseases, too much shade, unfavorable weather, improper pruning, too much nitrogen, and the tendency of some cultivars to produce heavy for one year and light for the following.

When is the best time to prune? How do I prune my fruit tree? The best time to prune is early spring or later winter. There are three primary reasons for pruning and training fruit trees.

1. Prune to influence the direction of shoot growth ensuring structural strength and desired tree form.
2. Prune to remove dead, diseased or damaged wood and prevent crowded or crossing branches.
3. Prune to maintain a good balance between your fruit crop and the trees growth.

Following these guidelines should result in a tree that fruits evenly and regularly, with well-spaced branches that bear sound, ripe fruits.

When do I spray? What do I spray with? And why is spraying needed? **Early spring is the best time to apply sprays to control certain insects, mites, and diseases on apple and pear trees. Gardeners who have had problems with certain pests and diseases in the past year should consider applying early season sprays to prevent or minimize pest damage to the leaves and fruit of apple and pear trees. Additional applications of fungicides or insecticides sprays during the growing season may be necessary to control specific pests**



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that are not present during the dormant and early season. Applying the proper sprays early in the growing season should minimize the use of pesticides during the remainder of the growing season.

Dormant oils are to be used before the leaf or fruit buds of apple and pear trees open in the spring. For central Ohio bud swell of apples, occurs in late March or early April. Applying dormant oils at this time can effectively control scale insects.

If oil is not applied by 1/2" green new growth, there are other options for controlling mites and scales. Scales can be controlled with an insecticide at the active crawler stage which occurs in late May and June. Mites can be controlled any time during the growing season with a miticide, such as Bonide Fruit Tree Spray. However, these insects or mites are more easily controlled in their immature stages during early before they increase into high populations later in the summer.

Apply solutions when the temperatures are above 45 degrees F and when the temps are not predicted to drop below 40 degrees F for 24 hours. Oil can cause leaf damage under cool temps, high humidity, or wet conditions. Summer oils however, like the All Seasons Spray Oil, have been developed for use on foliage during the summer without phytotoxicity problems. Oils and insecticidal soaps should never be mixed together for application. Gardeners must read the label for all types of oil sprays and closely follow all precautions.

Coverage on the entire tree is essential.

Complete Coverage:

Tree Height	Gallons/Tree
8 – 12 feet	1 to 3
12 – 18 feet	3 to 5
18 feet or higher	4 to 6

Early application of a fungicide is generally required to control apple scab on susceptible cultivars. At 1/2" green new growth a fungicide such as the Bonide Fruit Tree Spray should be applied to apple trees. Fungicide may be applied during bloom but do not apply an insecticide at bloom to protect bees.

For pear, apply dormant oil and a fungicide only at pink buds and Bonide Fruit Tree Spray at petal fall.