



Rejuvenation & Renewal Pruning

How and why to give your ornamental shrubs new life

What is Rejuvenation and Renewal Pruning?

- **Rejuvenation** pruning involves restoring plants to full vigor by pruning all stems or canes to ground level. Not all shrubs are able to handle this as well as others, but forsythia, lilac, privets, spirea, and weigela are prime candidates for rejuvenation. This is typically best done in late winter or early spring.
- **Renewal** pruning is a process by which shrubs are thinned to “renew” the shrub over 3 years. 1/3 of the shrub (focusing on the older, dead, and unhealthy branches) is taken out each year allowing better air circulation and light to infiltrate the plant. The result is a healthier shrub that has a more optimal size, more vigorous flowering, and better overall look.

Before and After

- Notice how the dead has been taken out of the Yellow Dogwood (below). This shrub had been overgrown and sheered into a ball year after year, creating dense and unhealthy growth. Pruning out the dead significantly increased the health of the plant, and it will have room to send up new shoots and fill out over the next year.



Why should I renew my ornamental shrubs?

1. Restore Health: give your shrubs new life without having to rip them out and replace them with younger shrubs
2. Better Flowering: Shrubs that have been renewed flower more vigorously because they can focus their energy on producing more buds rather than feeding an overgrown plant
3. Optimal Size: Often times shrubs get overgrown and neglected over time. Rejuvenation allows for shrubs to be brought back down to a more optimal size and have an improved appearance as it fills out
4. Less Maintenance: Correctly pruned shrubs in their natural shape and appearance (as opposed to a perfectly balled shape) don't need to constantly have their "stragglers" pruned throughout the season.

