

# Sperry Tree Care

NEWSLETTER

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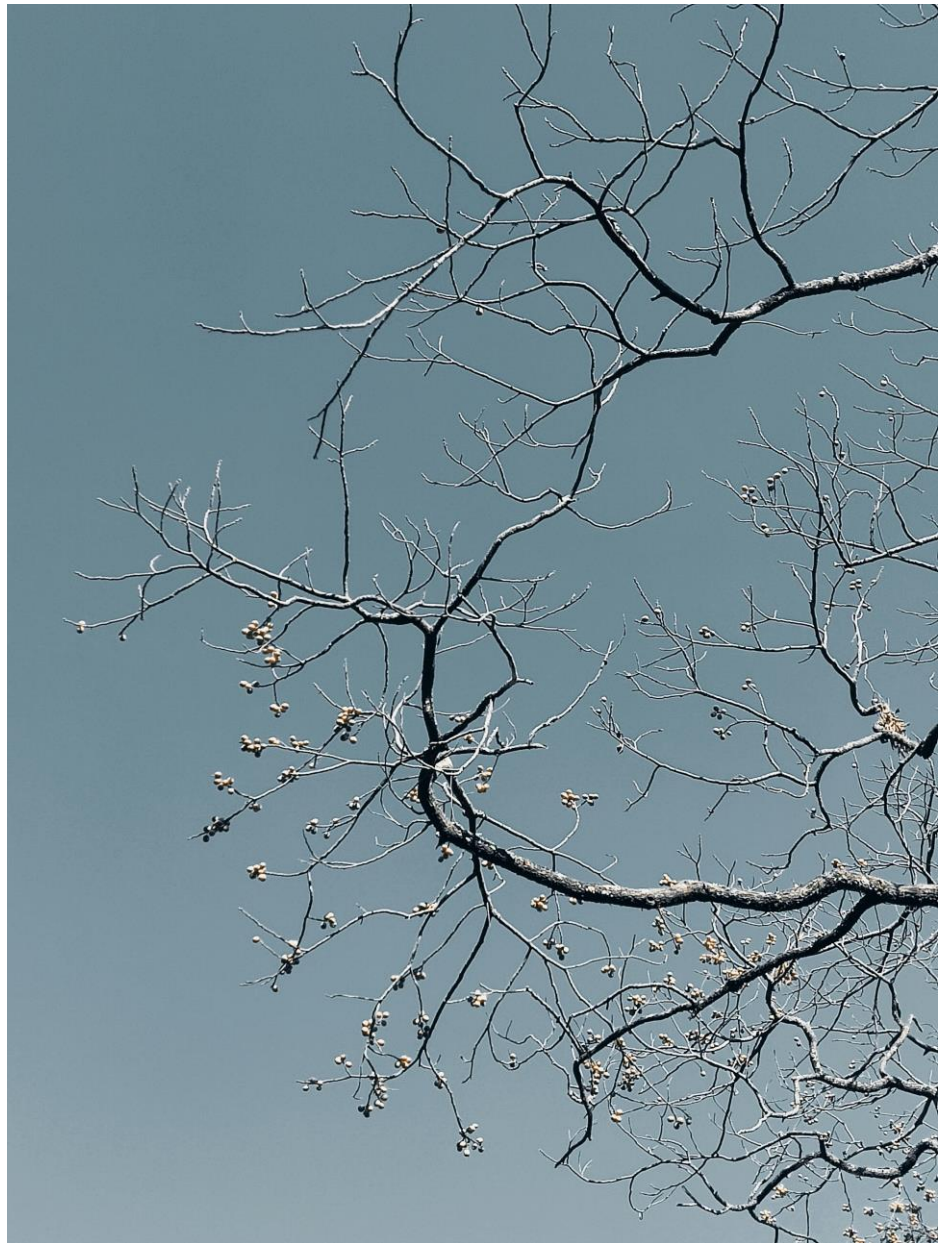
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Winter  
2025

### WELCOME TO OUR WINTER NEWSLETTER!

Winter is here and many of us are already looking forward to warmer days. However, winter is the perfect time to prepare your trees for the year ahead. In this issue we'll share valuable tips on winter tree care, fire preparedness, fruit tree pruning and planting during the dormant season. As we celebrate 35 years in business, we thank you for trusting Sperry Tree Care with the health and safety of your trees – season after season.



# Winter Tree Care

## TREE CARE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

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### Winter Tree Care in the Pacific Northwest

The Pacific Northwest (PNW) is known for its mild winters, but the region still experiences cold temperatures, rain, and occasional snow. As such, trees in this area require specific care during the winter months to ensure they remain healthy and resilient throughout the season. Whether you're dealing with native trees like Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar, or more ornamental species, winter care is essential to prevent damage and promote strong growth in the coming spring. Here's a guide to help you protect your trees during winter in the PNW.

#### 1. Watering

Although winter brings ample rainfall, trees can still suffer from dehydration, especially during dry spells or periods of frost. For young trees or newly planted ones, watering is especially crucial.

#### 2. Mulching

A thick layer of mulch around the base of your trees helps regulate soil temperature and moisture. It can also prevent frost from damaging roots and protect the bark from potential damage by lawnmowers or animals. Use organic mulch, such as wood chips or shredded leaves, to a depth of 2-4 inches, but avoid piling it directly against the trunk to prevent rot. Mulch also helps suppress weeds and promotes the health of beneficial soil organisms.

### 3. Pruning

Winter is a good time to prune deciduous trees because they are dormant, which means they are less likely to bleed sap or suffer stress from pruning. Dead, damaged, or diseased branches should be removed to prevent further damage during winter storms. However, avoid heavy pruning of evergreen trees like pines and firs during the colder months, as this can leave them vulnerable to frost damage.

### 4. Snow and Ice

Heavy snow and ice accumulation can cause limbs to break, especially if there's an accumulation of wet, heavy snow. Evergreen trees, in particular, can be susceptible to damage from the weight of snow. In the event of a snowstorm, gently shake the snow off the branches to reduce the weight, being careful not to damage the tree in the process. For young trees or those with delicate branches, consider using tree wraps or supports to prevent breakage.

### 5. Preparation for Spring

The work you do during the winter months will lay the foundation for healthy trees in the spring. Winter is a time for reflection on how your trees performed last year and what could be improved. Consider using this time to plan your spring tree care, including fertilization and additional pruning. A well-maintained tree will be better equipped to handle the stresses of the upcoming growing season.

By following these steps, you can ensure that your trees remain strong, healthy, and resilient in the face of the challenges posed by winter in the Pacific Northwest. Regular care and attention throughout the cold months can set your trees up for a successful growing season when spring arrives.

# Fruit Tree Pruning

## WHY WINTER PRUNING?

Winter pruning, when the tree is in its dormant phase, offers several advantages:

- **Less Stress:** Dormant trees are less susceptible to damage from pruning cuts.
- **Easier Visibility:** Without leaves, it's easier to see the structure of the tree, making it simpler to identify branches that need to be removed or shaped.
- **Encouraging Growth:** Proper pruning can stimulate new growth in the spring, leading to more productive fruiting.



## When to Prune Fruit Trees

The ideal time to prune fruit trees is during their dormant period, typically from late winter to early spring, just before the buds begin to swell but after the coldest part of winter has passed. Pruning too early, while the tree is still in deep dormancy, can leave it vulnerable to frost damage. Conversely, pruning too late in the season can delay new growth.

In the Pacific Northwest, pruning is generally done between late January and early March, depending on weather conditions. If you're unsure, it's best to wait until the risk of hard freezes has passed but before buds start to break.

Winter fruit tree pruning is an essential task that ensures healthy growth, prevents diseases, and improves fruit production. By having your fruit trees pruned you can keep your trees thriving throughout the season and prepare them for a productive harvest in the spring and summer.

Late winter /early spring is also the perfect time to plant bare-root fruit trees. This allows them to establish before the growing season is in full swing.

# Planting Season

## BEST BEFORE BUD BREAK

Planting season for young trees officially started last October, but its not too late!

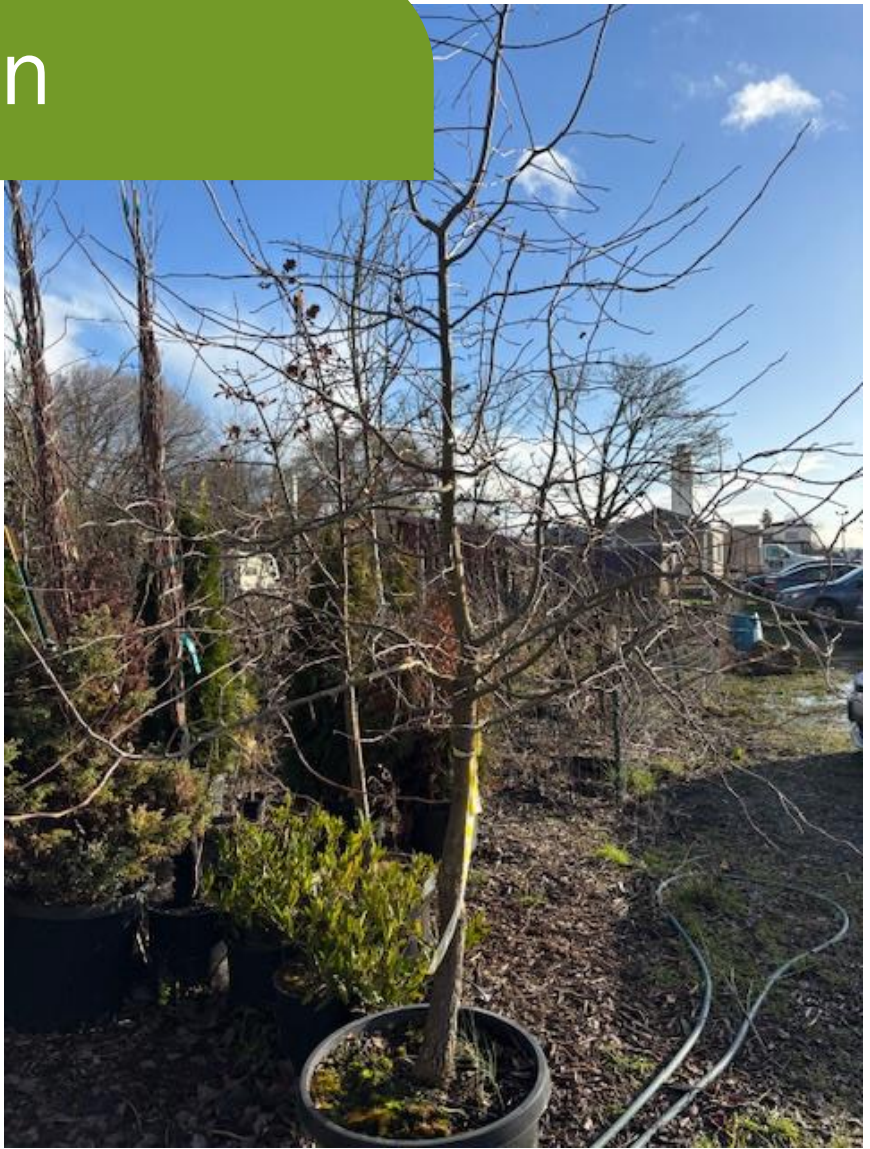
Planting new trees during their dormant season offers several advantages that promote healthy growth and establish a strong foundation for future development. The dormant season, typically late fall through early spring (before the buds begin to swell and new growth starts), is the optimal time for planting many types of trees. Here's why planting during this period is beneficial:

### 1. Reduced Stress on the Tree

- **Less Energy Demand:** During the dormant season, trees are not actively growing, which means they have less demand for water, nutrients, and energy. This allows the tree to focus more on root establishment and acclimating to its new environment rather than maintaining leaf or flower growth.
- **Fewer Pests and Diseases:** Dormant trees are less vulnerable to pests and diseases that often affect them during the growing season. Planting when these threats are less active helps reduce the risk of damage or infection.

### 2. Better Root Establishment

- **Root Focus:** When planted in winter or early spring, trees can concentrate their energy on developing strong roots before the stress of producing leaves and flowers. Root systems have time to grow deeper and spread before the hot and dry summer months.
- **Cooler Soil:** The cooler temperatures of winter and early spring help prevent stress caused by root shock, as the soil is still moist and at a manageable temperature for root growth. Warm soil can encourage faster leaf and top growth, but roots don't grow as quickly in hot soil.



### 3. Fewer Competing Weeds

- **Less Weed Growth:** The dormant season typically sees slower growth of competing weeds, which can compete with your new tree for water, nutrients, and sunlight. By planting during this time, the tree faces less competition and can focus more on establishing its root system.

### 4. Optimal Planting Window

- **Less Watering Needed:** Dormant trees require less water than actively growing trees. The cooler temperatures and frequent winter rains provide natural hydration for newly planted trees, reducing the need for intensive watering.
- **Time for Acclimatization:** Planting in the dormant season allows the tree to slowly acclimatize to its new environment and prepare for the burst of spring growth when temperatures warm up. This gradual transition helps reduce transplant shock.

### 5. Early Spring Growth

- **Earlier Spring Growth:** By planting trees in the dormant season, they are positioned to take advantage of early spring rains and warmer temperatures. This allows them to grow vigorously once they break dormancy, promoting a strong start to the growing season.
- **Head Start on the Growing Season:** Trees planted during the dormant period typically experience faster spring growth compared to those planted later in the season. By the time warmer weather arrives, they will already have established roots and can begin producing leaves, flowers, and fruit with more vigor.

### 6. Less Stressful for the Tree's Health

- **Avoiding Summer Heat:** If you plant in spring or summer, newly planted trees can struggle with heat stress, which can cause dehydration and hinder root development. Planting in the winter or early spring allows trees to avoid these stressors and settle in before the heat of summer arrives.

Planting trees during the dormant season sets the stage for healthier growth and a more successful establishment. By planting in the cooler, less stressful period, you allow trees to focus on developing their root systems, avoid the worst of the heat, and be primed for strong, healthy growth when the warmer months arrive. Whether you are planting bare-root, container-grown, or balled-and-burlapped trees, the dormant season is the best time for your new trees to thrive in their new environment.

Our ISA Certified Arborists can help you to select the right tree for the right place to meet your tree needs. Call to schedule a planting consult today!

# Fire Preparedness

## REDUCING FIRE RISK

Winter is the perfect time to prepare your trees for fire season. While the colder months may seem far from fire concerns, they offer an opportunity to take proactive steps in reducing fire risk and ensuring the safety of your property.

- 1. Prune Dead and Dying Branches:** During winter, trees are dormant, making it an ideal time to remove dead or damaged branches. These limbs can be a fire hazard, as they can easily catch and spread flames. Proper pruning helps create a buffer zone around your home or property, reducing the likelihood of fire reaching your trees.
- 2. Create Defensible Space:** Winter is also the time to establish or maintain defensible space around your property. Trim tree branches away from roofs, chimneys, and power lines, and clear out flammable vegetation. This creates a defensible perimeter that can help slow or stop a fire from spreading.
- 3. Inspect and Maintain Trees:** Use the winter months to inspect your trees for signs of disease, pest infestations, or structural weaknesses. Healthy trees are more resilient to fires, so early detection and treatment are key. Professional arborists can help identify potential risks and provide the necessary care.
- 4. Clear Dead Leaves and Debris:** Fallen leaves, pine needles, and other debris can accumulate under trees, creating a fire-prone layer. Regularly cleaning up dead vegetation during winter reduces the amount of fuel available to a fire when the warmer months arrive.

By using winter to address these tree care tasks, you'll be better prepared for fire season and can help protect your home and community. Regular maintenance throughout the year keeps your trees healthy and less vulnerable to fire damage, ensuring that they thrive while contributing to fire resilience.

# Leaf It to Us

## TREE SELECTION

Did you know that Sperry Tree Care has their own nursery? We are committed to providing our clients with high quality stock so our Arborists hand select and inspect trees against disease, girdling root, poor structure and other potential issues. If our nursery doesn't have the specific variety that you are looking for, we will source trees from other nurseries. Each tree receives the same discerning inspection before planting.

The process starts by meeting with an arborist for a planting consultation. They will learn more about what you are looking for in a tree, inspect the area you have selected and recommend trees that are the best match.

Once a selection has been made and the tree(s) are on hand, we will do the planting for you!

Our professionals are well versed in proper planting techniques, including correct depth and spacing which help trees to establish strong roots. Once your planting is complete you will receive guidance on proper post-planting care such as watering, mulching and pruning. In addition, we offer a 1-year guarantee against death caused by disease.

We recommend setting up planting consultations soon to ensure planting can be done before the end of the dormant season.



We offer **FREE** estimate appointments.  
Call our office or request an appointment online at [sperrytreecare.com](http://sperrytreecare.com).



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