

PRUNING CLEMATIS

Pruning clematis is not as difficult as one is led to believe. The most important thing you can do when you purchase a new clematis is to remember the variety. If you know which clematis you have, then it is easy to find out when is the correct time to prune.

Clematis fall into 3 pruning groups but for the first year after planting all clematis should be treated the same way. In February or early March, the clematis you planted last year should be cut back no matter what variety it is leaving 2 sets of buds on each stem between your cut and the level of the soil. After the first year, determine which group your clematis falls into and use the recommended pruning times.



GROUP 1: These clematis do not require any pruning after the first year and are the earliest to flower.

Clematis alpina

‘Columbine’, ‘Francis Ravis’, ‘Pamela Jackman’, ‘Ruby’, ‘White Moth’

Clematis armandii

‘Apple Blossom’, ‘Snowdrift’

Clematis chrysantha

Clematis balearica

Clematis macropetala

‘Bluebird’, ‘Maidwell Hall’, ‘Markhams Pink’

Clematis montana

‘Elizabeth’, ‘Picton’s Variety’, ‘Pink Perfection’, ‘Tetrarose’, ‘var. rubens’, ‘var. wilsonii’



GROUP 2: These clematis bloom on last years wood in the early summer. Prune lightly, only back to the first set of buds in February or March.

Clematis

‘Alice Fisk’, ‘Barbara Dibley’, ‘Bee’s Jubilee’, ‘Belle of Woking’, ‘Captain Thuilleaux’, ‘C.W. Dowman’, ‘Countess of Lovelace’, ‘Dr. Ruppel’, ‘Duchess of Edinburgh’, ‘Elsa Spath’, ‘Gillian Blades’, ‘Gladys Picard’, ‘Henry’, ‘H.F. Young’, ‘Horn of Plenty’, ‘Joan Pickton’, ‘Kathleen Dunford’, ‘Lady Londesborough’, ‘Lady Northcliffe’, ‘Lasursetern’, ‘Lawsonia’, ‘Madame le Coultre’, ‘Miss Bateman’, ‘Marie Boisselot’, ‘Nelly Moser’, ‘Niobe’, ‘Ramona’, ‘Sealand Gem’, ‘Silver’

GROUP 3: These later flowering clematis bloom on new wood or this year’s growth. They need to be pruned back hard to 30 inches or 75 cm just above the soil level at the end of February.

Clematis

‘Comtesse de Bouchaud’, ‘Earnest Markham’, ‘Etoile Violette’, ‘Gipsy Queen’, ‘Hagley Hybrid’, ‘Huldine’

Clematis x jackmanii

‘Alba’, ‘Superba’, ‘Lady Betty Balfour’, ‘Margaret Hunt’, ‘Margot Koster’

Clematis orientalis

‘Perle d’Azur’

Clematis tangutica

‘Victoria’

Clematis vitalba

Clematis viticella

‘Rubra’

ODDBALLS:

Clematis that produce double flowers on last years wood in early spring and single flowers on new wood in late summer, early fall should only receive a light pruning as instructed in Group 2.