

naturally by exposing nematodes to sunlight.

- Mature fig trees could reach 30 feet in height with roots spreading three times the diameter of the canopy. Don't plant figs near septic systems or clay drainage pipes since roots could clog or shatter the plumbing.

Writer Bio

James Young began writing in 1969 as a military journalist combat correspondent in Vietnam. Young's articles have been published in "Tai Chi Magazine," "Seattle Post-Intelligencer," Sonar 4 ezine, "Stars & Stripes" and "Fine Woodworking." He has worked as a foundryman, woodturner, electronics technician, herb farmer and woodcarver. Young graduated from North Seattle Community College with an associate degree in applied science and electronic technology.

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By: Teo Spengler

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Figs lose their leaves in winter, but unlike most deciduous trees do not fare well with winter pruning. Fig trees produce figs whether pruned or not. Horticulturists at the University of Florida recommend minimal trimming. If you must prune your fig tree, do it just after the last rip fig is harvested.

Description

Figs are not meant for small gardens. These trees sometimes top out at 50 feet and often spread wider than they are tall. Although taproots anchor the tree in deep soil, horizontal roots spread near the soil surface the length of the canopy. The lobed leaves are larger than a grown man's foot. Homeowners who under-estimated the size of their fig cannot rely on heavy winter pruning keeping it small without forgoing the fig crop.

Fig Pruning

A common fig tree offers double pleasure. It provides a wide canopy of deep shade, thanks to its enormous, deeply lobed leaves, and produces fruit. Most figs produce a smaller, breba crop in spring and the main crop in summer. The California Rare Fruit Growers' Association recommends light pruning immediately after harvesting the main crop. This allows the tree time to start timely bud production for the next year.

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Pruning Damaged Branches

When a branch breaks or cracks, an immediate trim reduces damage. Wind or gravity cause a damaged branch to fall, ripping away bark or even wood from uninjured sections, leaving it open to insect attack or disease. Shear the branch just below the break as soon as possible after the injury. When branches suffer freeze-damage, wait until spring when new growth begins before eliminating the bad wood.

Pruning Late-Ripening Cultivars

The fruit of some varieties of fig trees ripen very late in fall or early in winter. If you wait to prune these trees until after harvest, you risk removing the terminals of previous year's wood bearing the next year's crop. Instead, prune late-ripening cultivars in the summer, trimming half the branches one year and the remainder the next. Prune sparingly, as even this approach may reduce the following year's crop.

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References

Resources

Writer Bio

From Alaska to California, from France's Basque Country to Mexico's Pacific Coast, Teo Spengler has dug the soil, planted seeds and helped trees, flowers and veggies thrive. World traveler, professional writer and consummate gardener, Spengler earned a BA from U.C. Santa Cruz, a law degree from Berkeley's Boalt Hall, and an MA and MFA from San Francisco State. She currently divides her life between San Francisco and southwestern France.

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Thinning a fruit crop eliminates alternate-year bearing and increases fruit quality in many species of fruit trees, but not the pomegranate. This tree produces well in semi-tropical and semi-arid regions such as southern California, Arizona, southern Texas and northern Mexico. Though pomegranates may survive temperatures as low as 12 degrees F, the trees