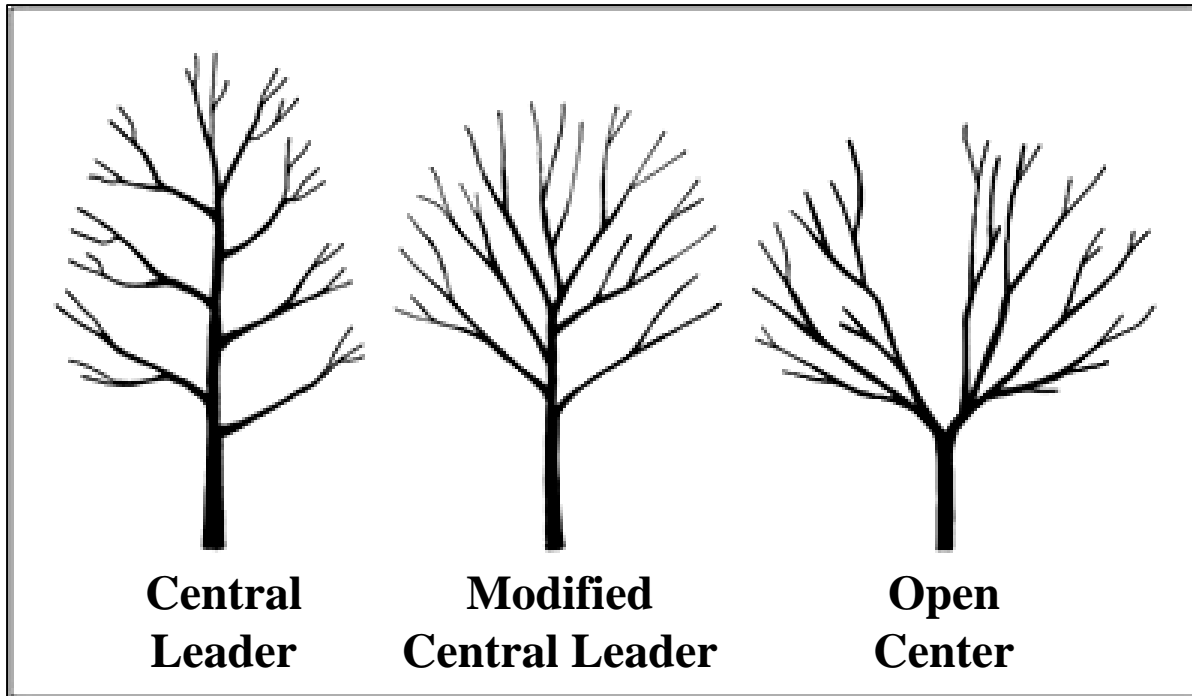


Pruning Fruit Trees



David Cook

The Purpose of Pruning

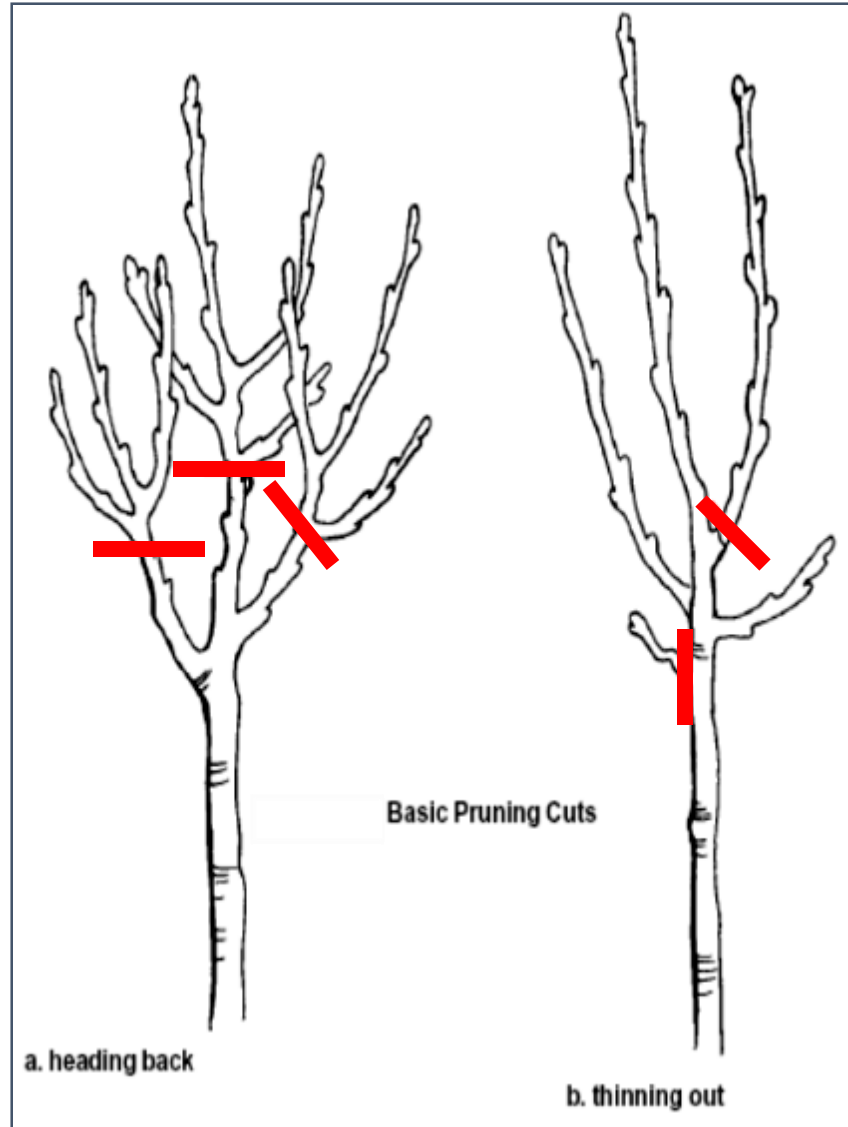
The removal of a portion of a plant will:

- Stiffen and strengthen limbs
- Remove unfruitful branches
- Promote growth in desired areas
- Adjust crop size and increase fruit size
- Remove dead, broken or diseased limbs
- Promote development of wood for future crops

Types of Pruning Cuts

Heading Cuts:

Cutting a portion of a limb off

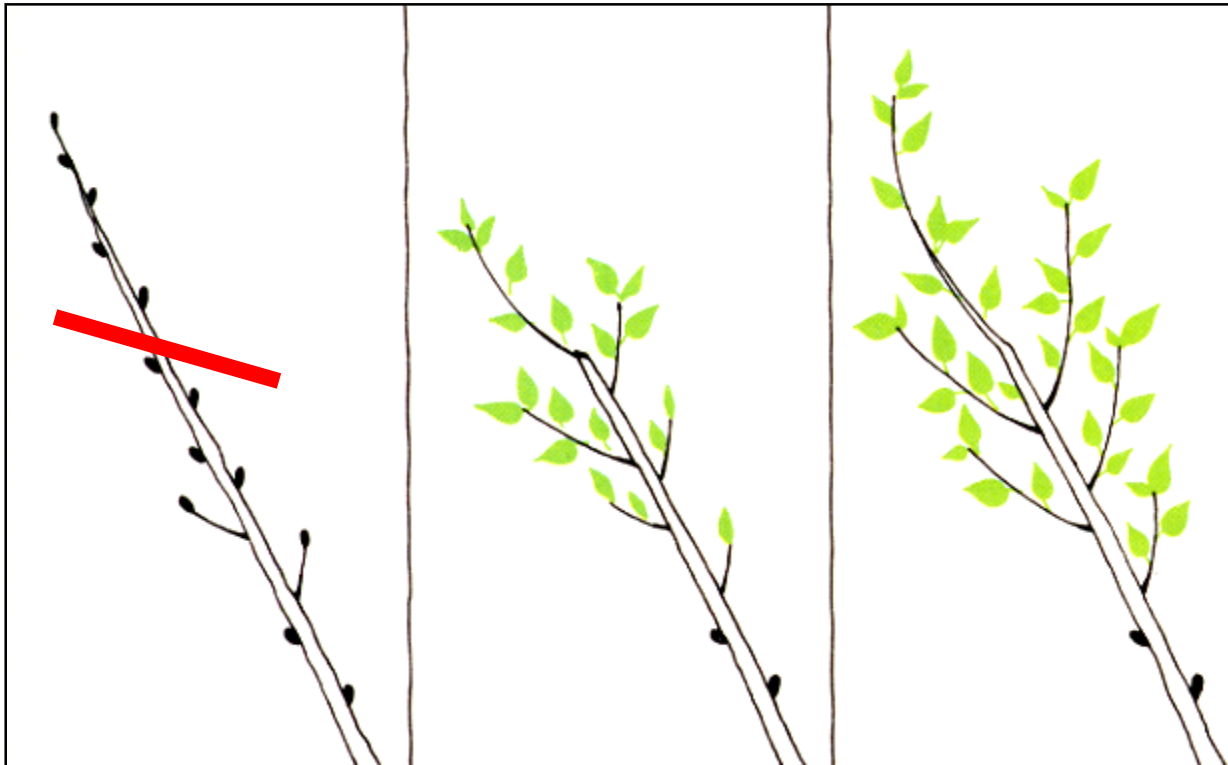


Thinning Cuts:

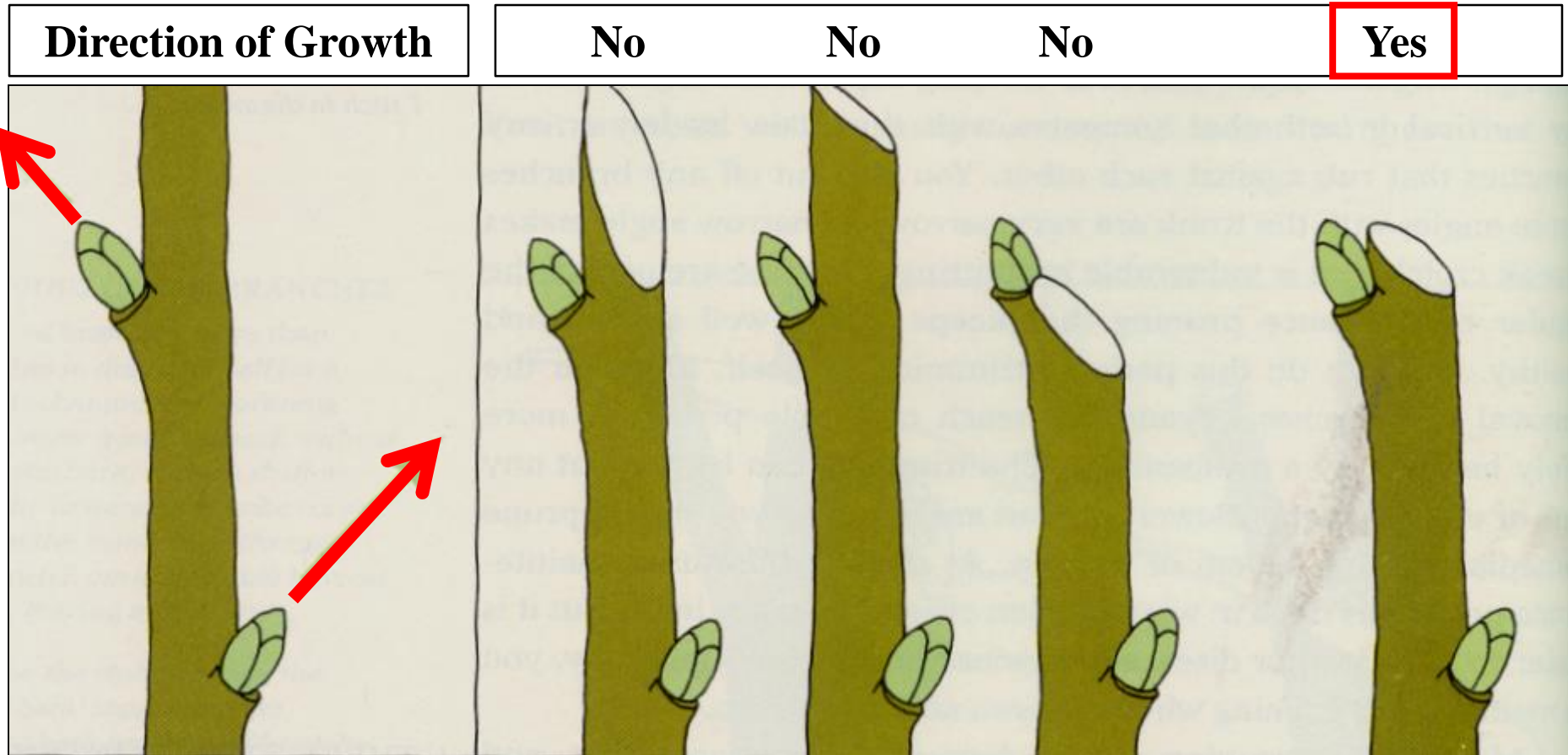
Removal of entire limbs

Heading Cuts

- Heading cuts are used to stiffen limbs and promote lateral branching.
- Heading cuts are used on young trees for scaffold limb development.

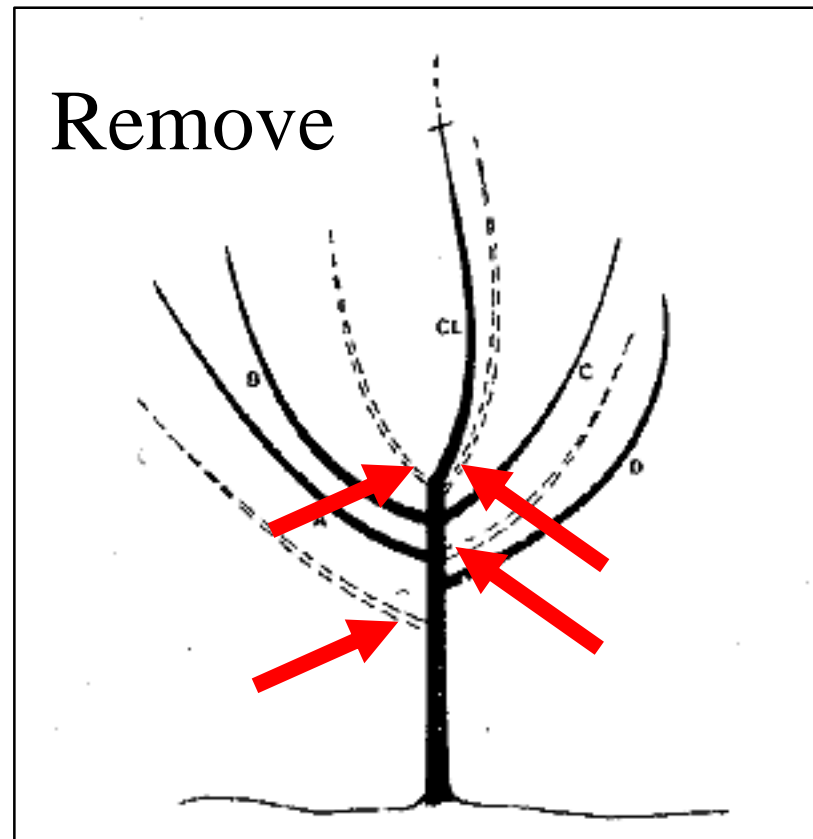
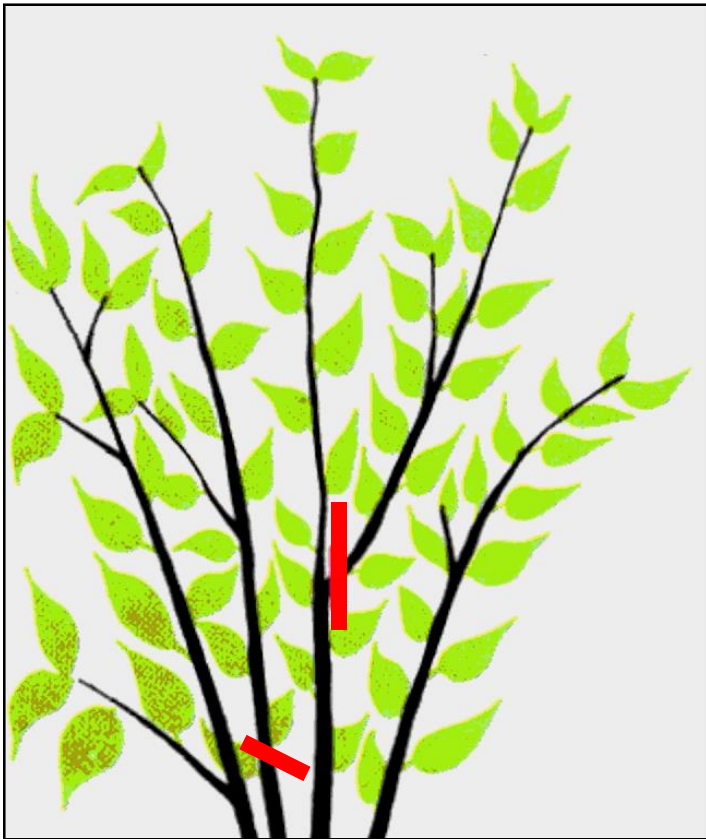


Make a gently sloping cut
about 1/4 inch above the bud



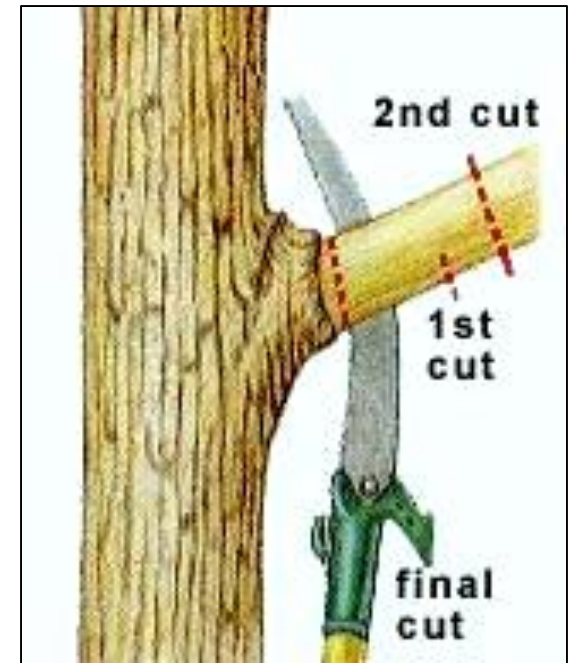
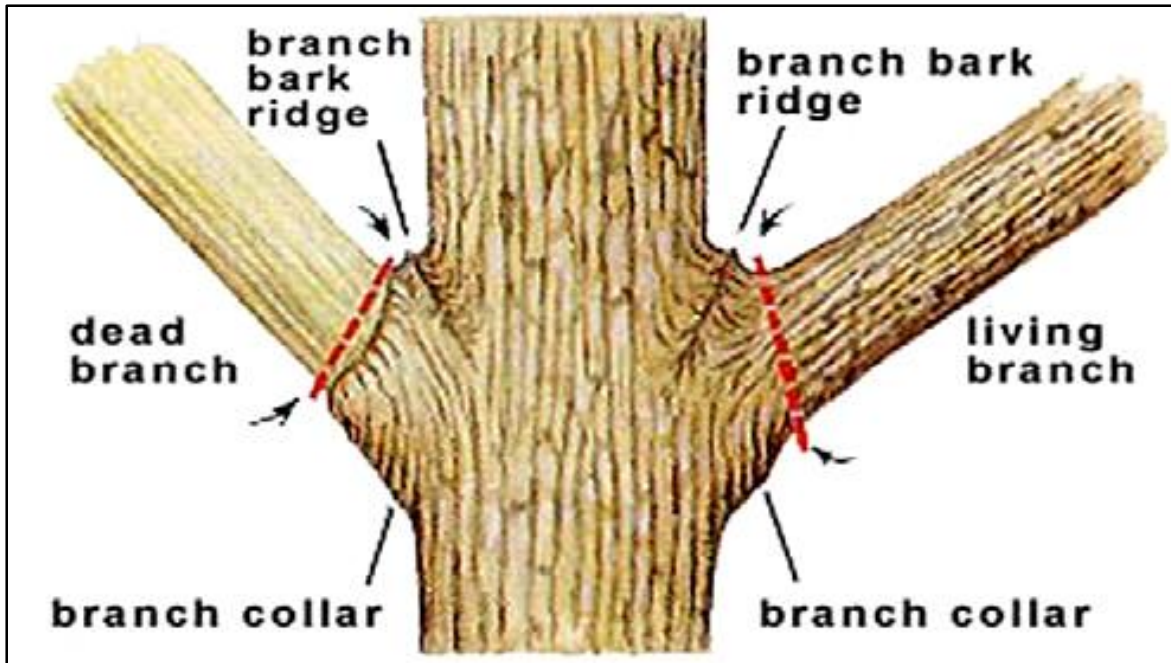
Thinning Cuts

- Thinning cuts are used to open up the canopy for light and to renovate fruiting wood.

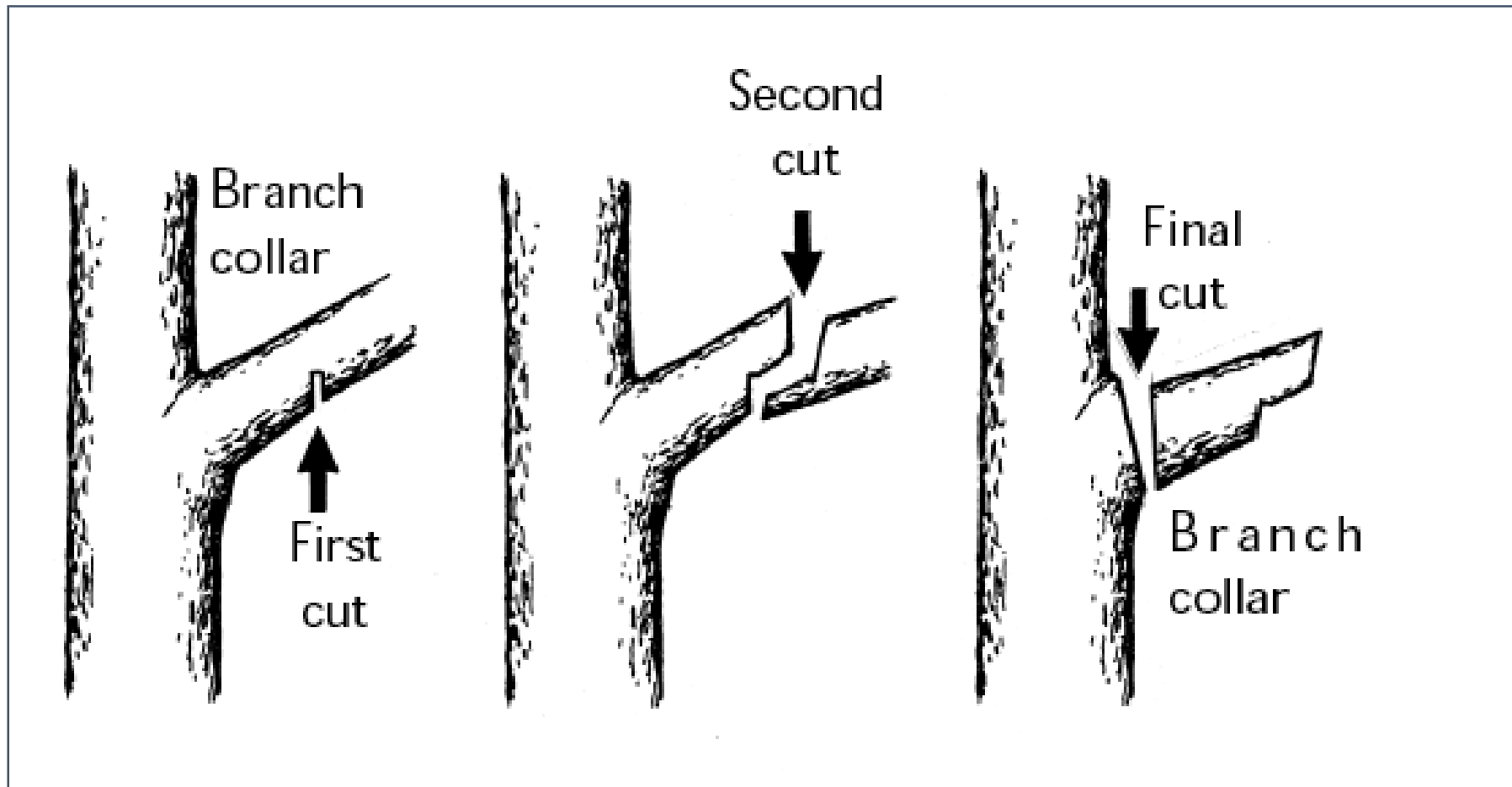


Removing an Entire Branch

- Cut outside the branch collar for a smaller cut to reduce the chance of damage to the trunk of the tree.

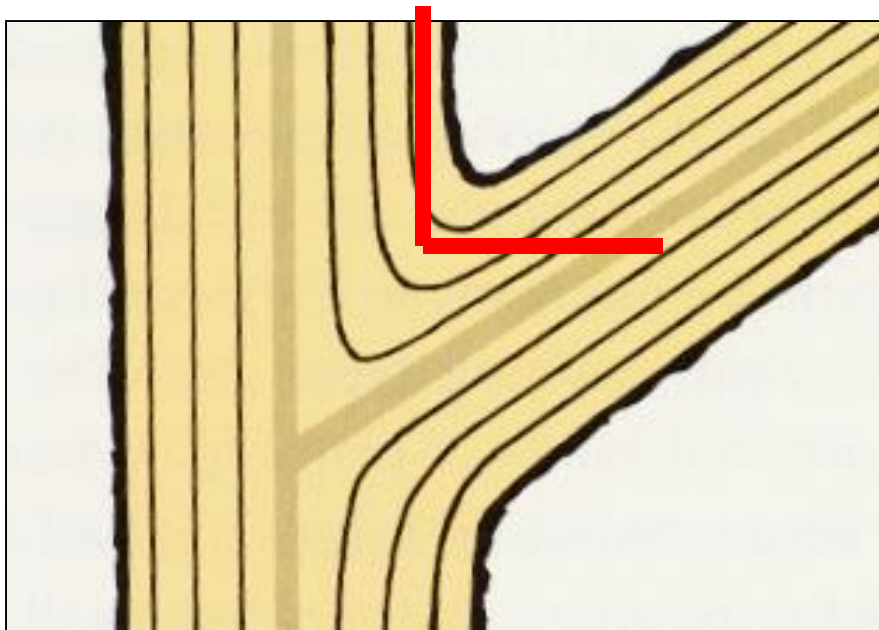


Sequence of Cuts Involved in Removing a Large Limb

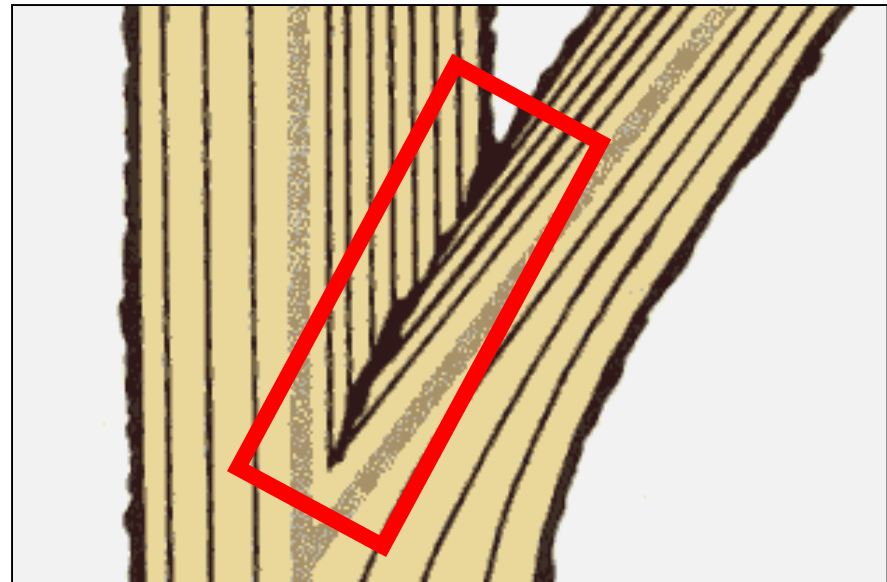


Select Trees with Wide-Angled Limbs

- Strong point of attachment to the trunk, little chance of breakage



- Bark Inclusion:
Dead tissue between the junction
of the limb and the trunk
(weakly attached limb)



Suggested Sequence of Pruning Cuts

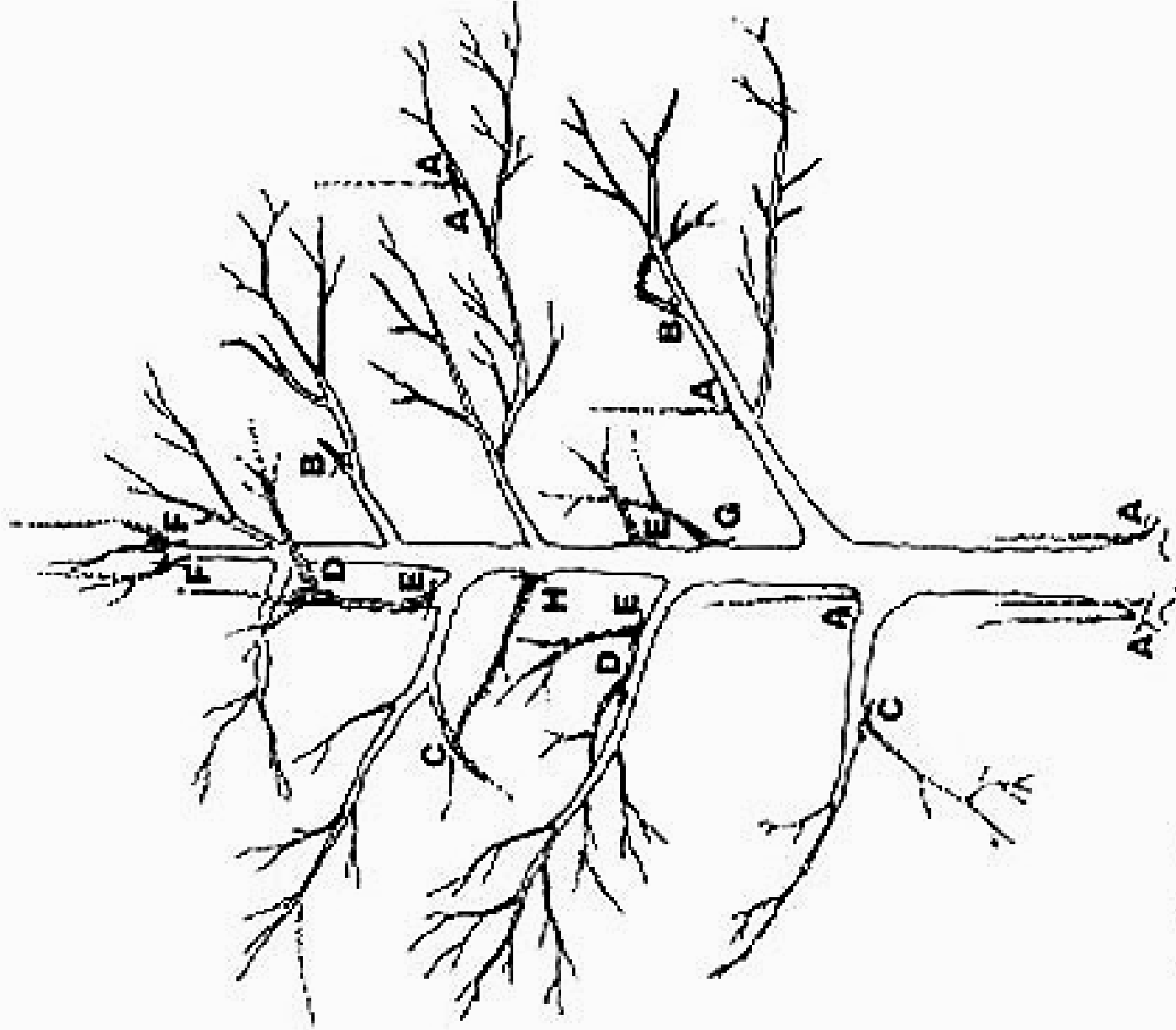
Small Cuts:

- Remove root suckers.
- Remove watersprouts
- Thin fruiting wood on branches.

Big Cuts:

- Remove dead, broken or diseased wood.
- Remove crowded limbs crossing or within 2 – 3 ft.
- Remove low, drooping limbs (especially those shorter than the limbs above them).
- Remove large limbs in tree center (except for central leader).

Pictorial Pruning Guide



A - Suckers

B - Stubs or broken branches

C - Downward growing branches

D - Rubbing branches

E - Upward growing interior branches

F - Competing leaders

G - Narrow crotches

H - Whorls

Central Leader System:

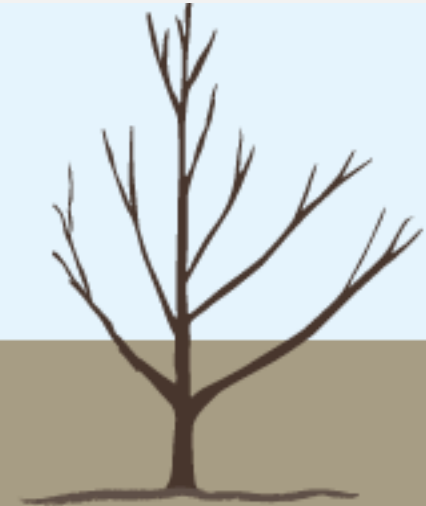
This pruning method is used for training **apple & pear trees**.

Open Center System:

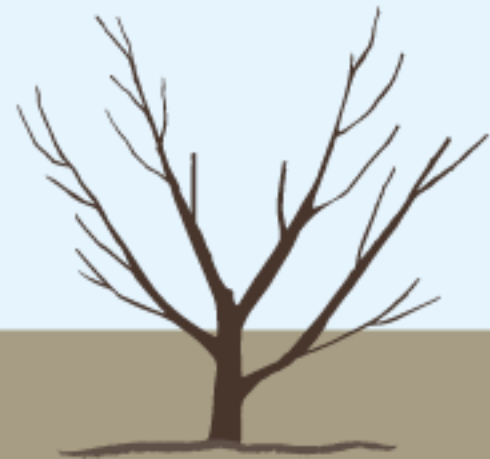
This pruning method is used for training **peach, plum and cherry trees**.

Plum trees can be pruned to either a central leader or an open center.

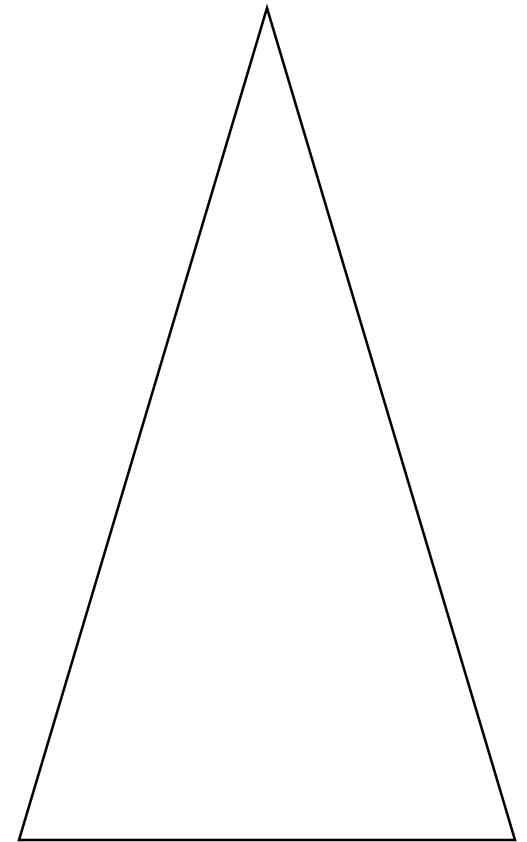
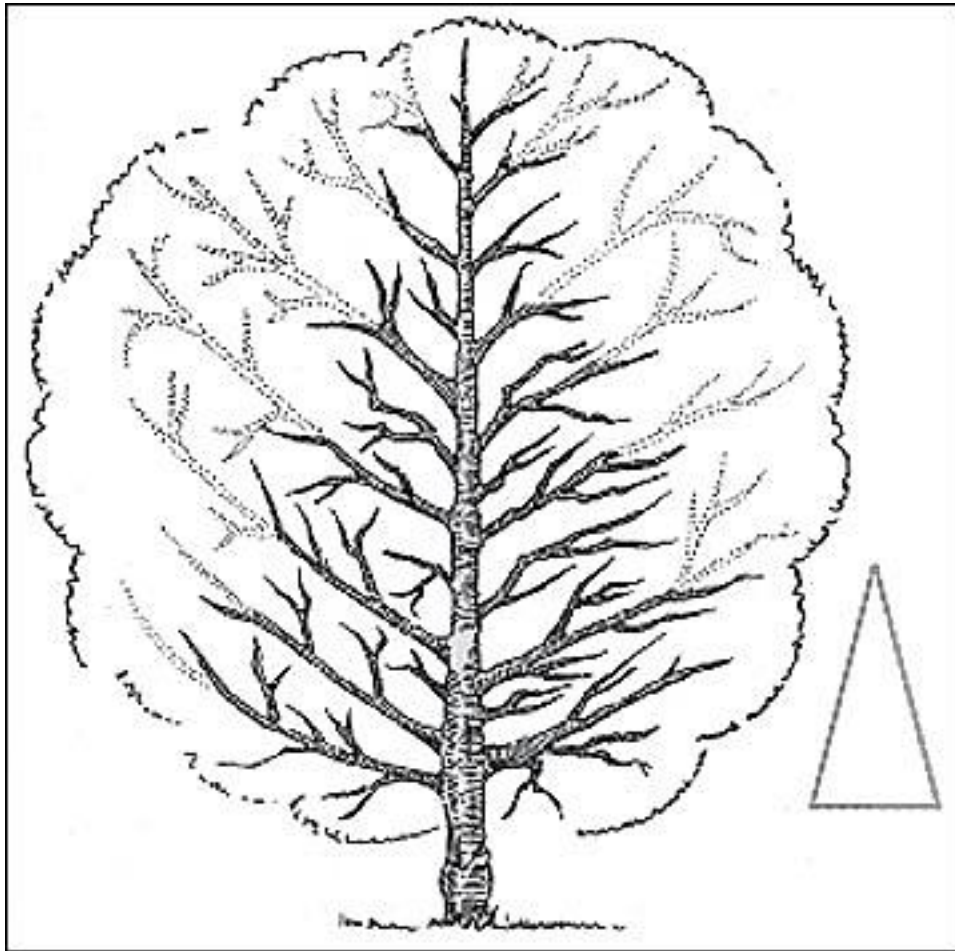
Central Leader System



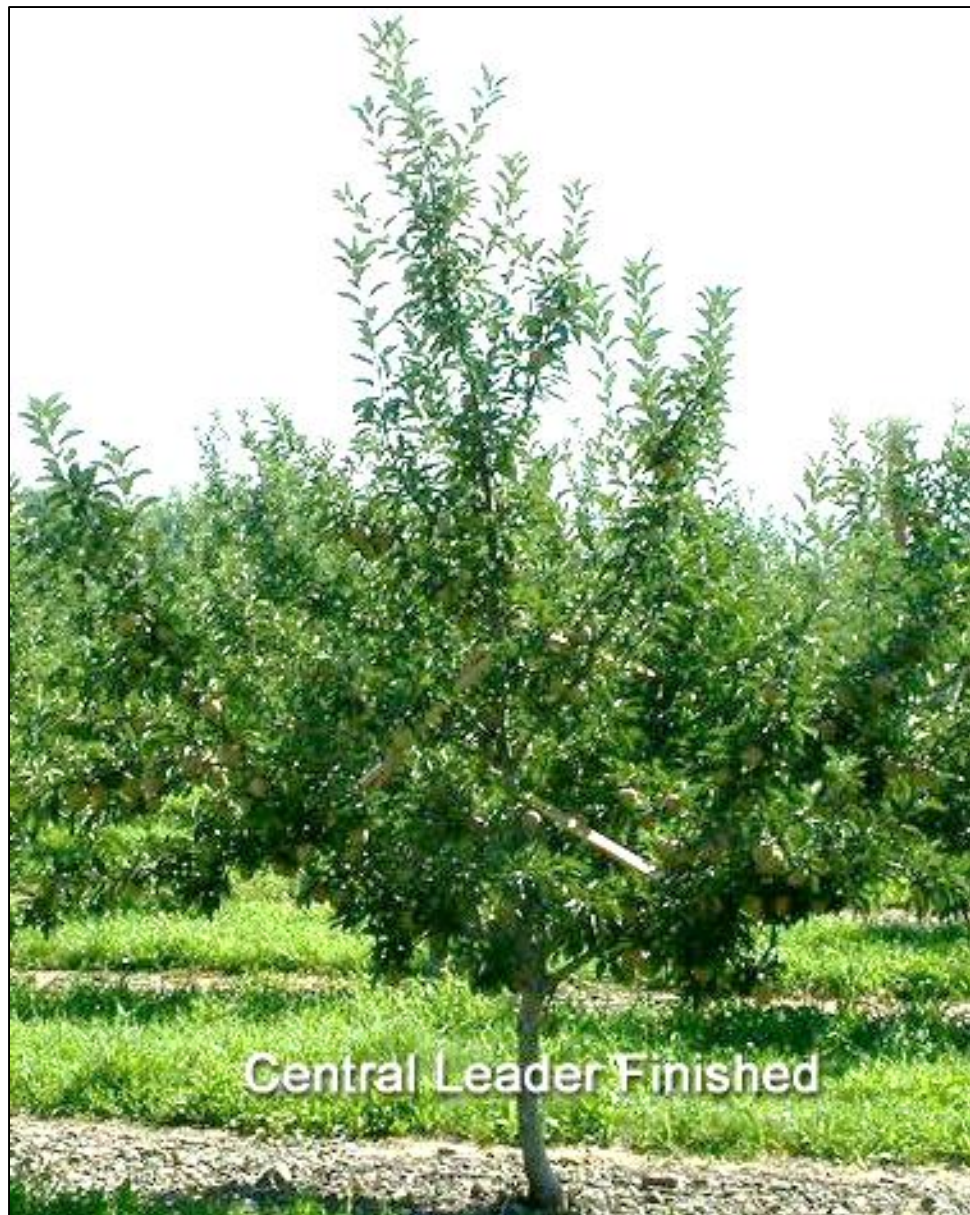
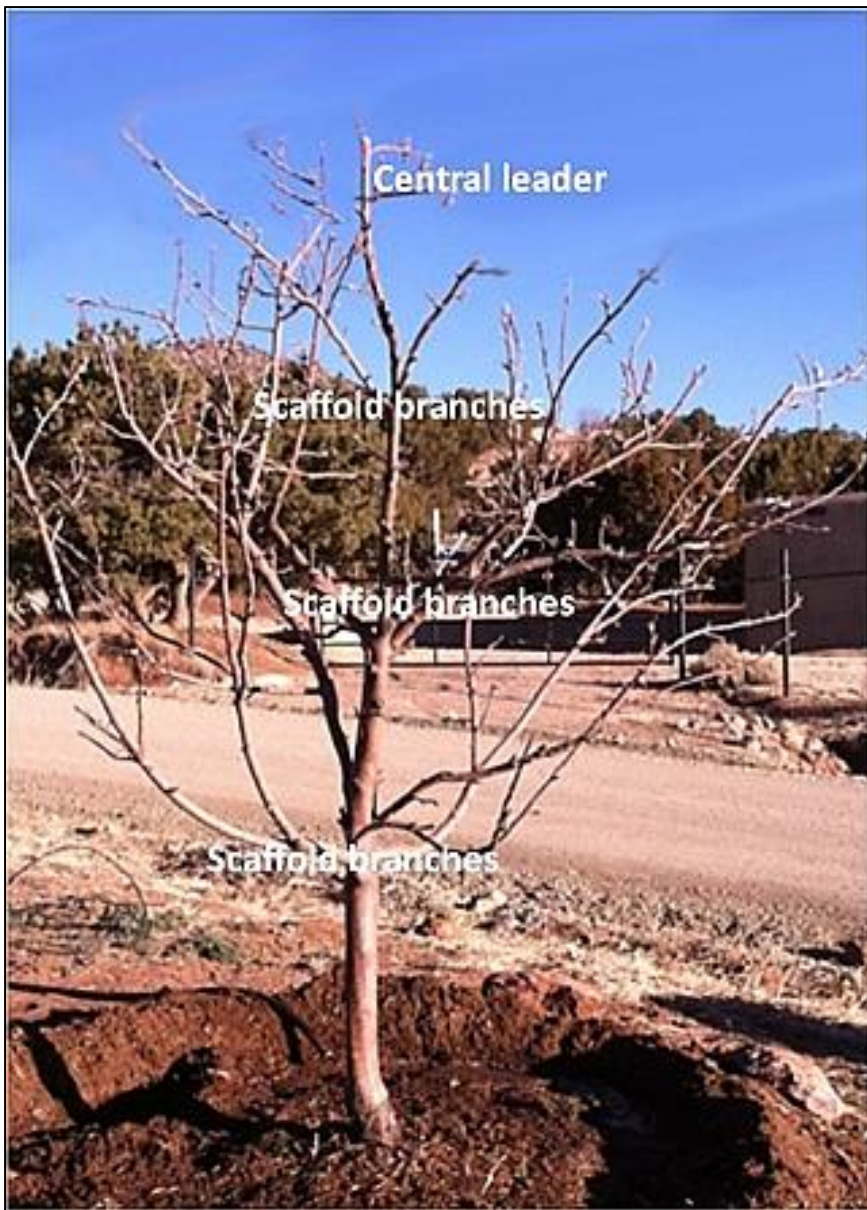
Open Center System



Mature Apple or Pear Tree Shape



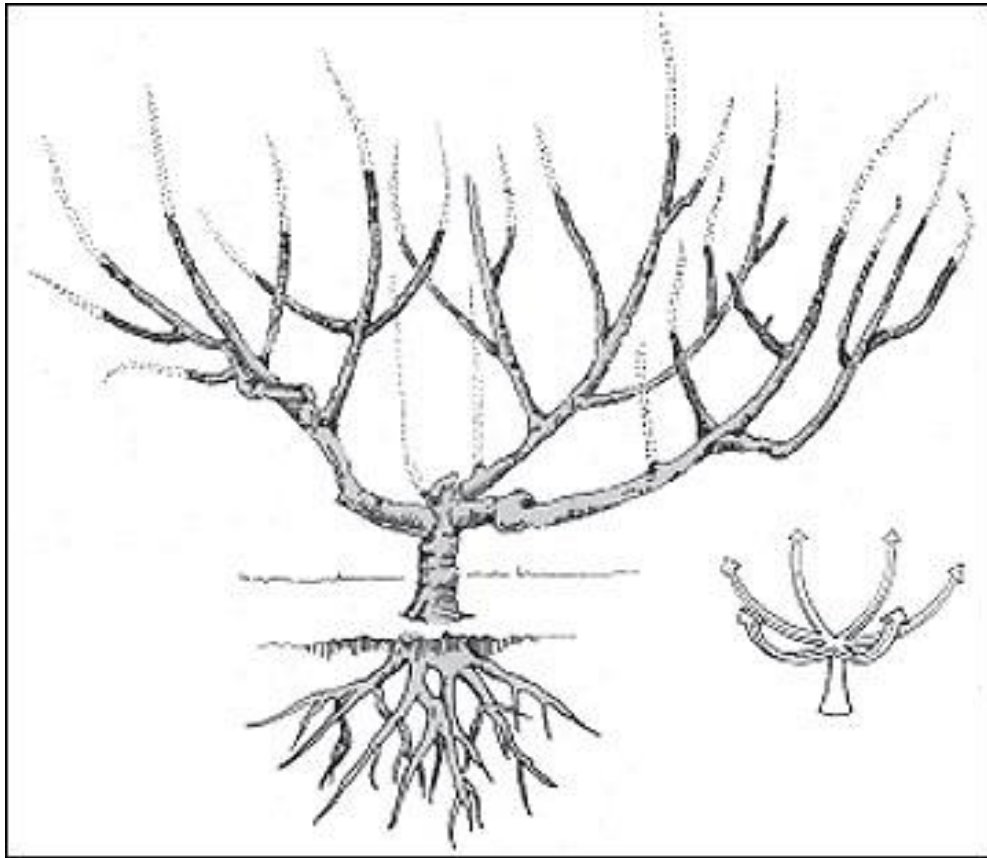
Apple Tree Central Leader Form



Open Center System used for training stone fruits (peach, nectarine, plum and cherry)



Mature Peach Tree Shape



Peach tree after
late winter pruning



Sunlight is the Key to Fruit Production

- Reduces pest problems.
- Increases fruit quality. (color, soluble solids)
- Maintains fruitfulness of the interior portions of the plant.

