

Pruning guidelines for conifers (Harris and others 1981)

<i>Genus and Branching Pattern</i>	<i>Distribution of Latent Buds or Dormant Growing Points</i>	<i>Type of Growth</i>	<i>Method of Pruning for a Given Response^a</i>		
			<i>Reduce size, Direct Growth</i>	<i>Increase Density</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<u>Usually whorled</u>					
Pine	Almost none. See comments for exceptions.	From preformed initials in most species. Some have more than one flush of growth.	Tip or cut to lateral shoots only. Do not cut below terminal buds.	Pinch candle when it expands in the spring. This may be done on each flush of growth.	Canary Island pine and a few others have latent buds and may be pruned more severely if necessary.
Spruce Fir Douglas Fir	Some.	New growth from preformed initials.	Tip or cut to lateral shoots or visible dormant buds.	Pinch lateral shoots in spring when they expand. The terminal (leader) may or may not form multiple leaders if pinched.	These usually require little pruning. Remove bottom limbs for clearance over several years.
<u>Random branching</u>					
True cedar Larch	Some latent buds on short spur-like shoots.	Long shoots have new growth from preformed initials but continue growth with favorable conditions.	Cut to lateral on long shoots. Short shoots may break into long shoot growth.	Pinch expanding shoots.	These usually require little pruning. Remove bottom limbs for clearance over several years.
Podocarpus	None or few.	More or less continuous under favorable conditions.	Thin to laterals or visible foliage.	Pinch expanding shoots.	Removal of leader may produce a multistem crown.
Bald cypress Dawn redwood Cryptomeria Grant sequoia	May have some growing points capable of new growth.	More or less continuous under favorable conditions.	Thin to laterals or visible foliage tufts.	Pinch expanding shoots.	These species have both persistent and annual (deciduous) shoots. Prune to persistent shoots.
Arborvitae False cypress Incense cedar Cypress	No true buds. Numerous dormant growing points where foliage persists.	More or less continuous under favorable conditions.	Thin to laterals or within visible foliage.	Tip prune.	Do not prune into bare wood. Cypress are very slow to make new growth after pruning.
Juniper Yews	Numerous dormant growing points in foliage areas, some on older wood.	More or less continuous under favorable conditions.	Thin to laterals, tip prune.	Tip prune.	Those with needle-like foliage may not respond to pruning as well as those with awl-shaped or scale-like foliage.
Coast redwood	Numerous latent buds.	More or less continuous under favorable conditions.	Thin to laterals, tip prune.	Tip prune.	Remove multiple leaders.

^aFor maximum dwarfing effect, prune in any of the suggested ways in late summer.