

## Clematis Pruning

Depending on the cultivar, Clematis bloom from various types of growth each year. It is important to understand how each cultivar blooms in order to properly prune them. When done properly, pruning will promote flowering. Conversely, when Clematis are not pruned properly, the flowers will be delayed or they might not flower until the next growing season. For example, certain varieties flower only on the previous year's growth. These cultivars should only be pruned to remove weak or dead stems after they have finished flowering.

- **Identifying the clematis group** To help avoid confusion, Clematis can be separated into groups based on their flowering characteristics and pruning preferences. For your convenience, these groups are listed below. Our general recommendation is to prune all Clematis to about 12 inches within the first year of planting. This encourages them to form a strong root system and promotes new shoots to develop which leads to more flowers in the future. In the following years, they should be pruned to a height of 3 to 5 feet or by following the specific pruning guidelines for each specific cultivar as outlined below.
- **Group 1** Clematis cultivars in this group flower on the previous season's growth. Generally, they can be left unpruned. If pruning is necessary, wait until the flowering is completed and remove only the weak or dead stems.

- **Group 2** These cultivars produce early season bloom on the previous season's growth and late season flowers on new growth. Generally, these cultivars are only pruned to shape. In the early spring (February or March), prune them lightly above the first pair of new swollen leaf buds, removing about 12 inches from each shoot. Also remove any dead or weak stems at this time.
- **Group 3** Varieties within this group flower on the new season's growth; they are often the most vigorous cultivars. Prune all of the main stems back to about 3 feet above the ground in February or March, leaving at least one pair of strong looking buds on each stem. Also remove any dead or weak stems at this time.

