

How to Prune a Clematis

In pruning clematis, your overall goal is to create a plant that will flower strongly each year at various heights from ground level to a comfortable height where you can enjoy and reach the plant for maintenance. By pruning you control size, keep the plant trained to its armature, and create the space for new growth to replace old wood.

Take a step-by-step approach to pruning clematis. Start by deciding what size you wanted your plant to eventually be at maturity. This is probably determined by the size of your support structure, but keep in mind that you want to be able to reach the top to prune and train it.

Continue your pruning by noting your variety of clematis, when it will bloom and if it will develop wood. At the right time of year, cut back late bloomers to the ground and matured spring bloomers to their original framework of tidy, strong, trained stems.

Finally, if it's a woody clematis, select old canes to cut back all the way to the ground, stimulating strong new growth, a textured look, and exposing all levels of the plant to light and new growth.

