



How To Prune Mophead and Lacecap Hydrangeas



1. Prune in late May when you can clearly see what's living and what's dead. Every green bud or set of leaves has the potential to form flowers, so don't trim them down.

2. Begin by removing any cane that has no green growth on it. Cut those down to the ground. Use loppers if you have trouble getting down to the base to make the cut.

3. Remove any dead tips of canes, making the cut about an inch above the first set of leaves or buds you come to. If there is a green bud at the very top of the cane, do not cut that back...that bud will open to be a huge flower! Do not cut all of the canes back - the more green buds you remove, the fewer flowers you will have in the summer.

4. If there are weak or funky stems that lay on the ground, remove those. Then stop. The canes don't have to be all the same size. Once the leaves come out and new canes grow from the ground, the plant will look more uniform.

5. Give up on keeping them short. These shrubs replace their growth in one summer. If your plant is too tall for the location, move it.

6. Occasionally we'll have a cold winter that kills all the buds on all of the canes. If your canes have no green growth by the end of May, that's what has happened. Cut all of those bare, dead stems to the ground.

