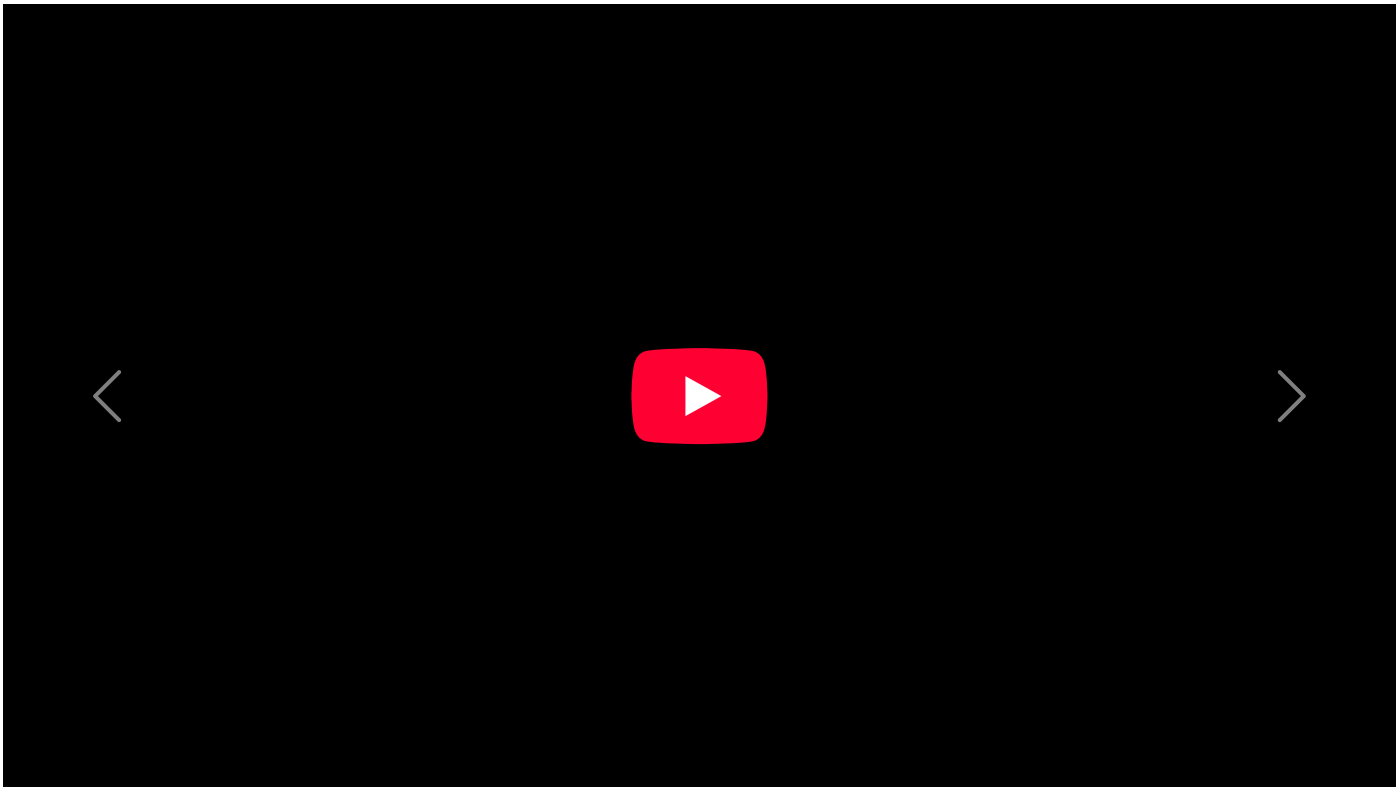
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ISSN 2815-522X

Winter Pruning for Fruit Production in Apple Trees - Types of Twigs, Principles and Rules

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Date: 04.03.2026 *Issue:* 3/2026



In the video, Prof. Stefan Gandev demonstrates practically how to perform winter pruning on fruit-bearing apple trees (4 and 8 years old). The main goal of pruning is to balance vegetative growth and ensure quality fruit production.

Key points and principles of winter pruning for apple trees:

Types of shoots in apple trees: Before the actual pruning, it is explained that apple trees have different types of shoots – short, spur-like, weak, woody, and water sprouts. It is important to know that the fruit-bearing shoots (those that bear fruit) are mainly the short, weak, and spur-like ones. Water sprouts and strong woody shoots have only leaf buds.

Where to start: Pruning always starts from the top of the tree (the leader), removing its competitors.

ISSN 2815-522X

Removal of unsuitable branches: Branches with a very sharp growth angle, water sprouts, as well as branches growing vertically upward or straight down are cut out. Shoots with moderate growth and a wide angle of divergence are preserved, as they are most suitable for fruiting [02:46].

Rule for one-year-old wood: It is explicitly emphasized not to shorten one-year-old wood. If it is cut, strong water sprouts with a sharp angle will develop below the cut. Instead, one-year-old shoots are left whole so that they can grow fruit-bearing wood the following year [08:41].

Branch thickness: If a scaffold branch or limb reaches a thickness close to 1/2 of that of the central trunk (the leader), it should be removed because it begins to take too many nutrients and hinders the normal development of the tree [22:10].

Proper cuts: Cuts should be made flush to the base (to the collar), without leaving "stubs" [06:35].

Correcting old mistakes: It is demonstrated how to correct trees that have been pruned incorrectly in the past (for example, excessive shortening of limbs) by cutting back to fruit buds so that the future fruit can absorb the excess growth vigor [26:49].