

Pruning Tomatoes



REVELSTOKE  
**LOCAL**  
**FOOD**  
INITIATIVE



# DETERMINE YOUR TYPE OF TOMATO PLANTS - CHECK YOUR SEED PACKET OR THE VARIETY NAME ONLINE.

## DETERMINATE OR BUSH TOMATOES

Never prune a bush tomato, the height of these plants is limited by their variety to 3'-4' when they produce fruit on the top bud - they stop growing higher - all tomatoes will ripen at approximately the same time.

## INDETERMINATE TOMATOES

These plants will grow until killed by the frost. These are the types that need to be pruned. From our research - most heirloom tomato varieties are indeterminate. If you have indeterminate tomatoes and need to know how to prune them, keep reading.

01

# WHY PRUNE TOMATOES

Pruning is not necessary, but if you want bigger fruit and taller plants, or to keep these vigorous plants organized, then pruning is suggested.

It's said that some indeterminate varieties respond differently to pruning, but those are fine details we won't cover here.

Now, onto "how" to prune!



02

Identify the "suckers."

Suckers are new growth that occurs at the connection of a leaf stem and the main stem. These suckers will take energy from the main stem, becoming a new leader if you leave them on. Some growers prune plants to have two or even three leaders by picking a strong lower sucker to develop.



**03** Prune the suckers  
Wait until the suckers are about an inch at least, so you can pinch them and snap them cleanly sideways. The cleaner the wound, the better. You can also use sterile clippers if you prefer. Clean then between each plant, so as not to spread disease.

**04** Prune every week or so to maintain the energy of the plant directing upward and into that dominant leader/stem.

05

Keep trellising!

Tomatoes don't climb, like peas or cucumbers. Give them a little help to continue up your trellis.

