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January Orchard Checklist

The January jobs for your fruit trees, by climate band. Months are typical for each band: let your local frost dates and your trees have the final say.

Cold zones 3–5

- ☐ Order trees for spring planting
  Fall and early winter, before planting season · New trees

Middle zones 6–7

- ☐ Clean and disinfect pruners when cutting diseased wood
  Whenever you prune out diseased wood · Zone 7 only
- ☐ Prune persimmons lightly in winter
  Winter, while dormant · Persimmons · Bearing trees · Zone 7 only
- ☐ Train young persimmons to a pyramid
  Winter, first few years · Persimmons · Young trees · Zone 7 only
- ☐ Remove fire blight cankers while dormant
  Dormant season · Apples, pears · Zone 7 only
- ☐ Prune out black knot galls in late winter
  Late winter, on a day below freezing · Cherries, plums · Zone 7 only

Warm zones 8–10

- ☐ Prune cherries in late winter, after hard cold
  Late winter, after the coldest weather · Cherries · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Choose cold-hardy citrus where freezes are common
  Before buying a tree · Citrus · New trees · Zone 9 only
- ☐ Feed established citrus just before bloom
  Late winter, before bloom (January to March) · Citrus · Bearing trees · Zones 9, 10
- ☐ Choose three to eight leaders for a bush
  Late winter after the first season, before growth starts · Figs · Young trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune figs lightly before growth begins
  Late winter, after the coldest weather, before growth begins · Figs · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Check bare-root trees the day they arrive
  When bare-root trees arrive in early spring · New trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Plant bare-root trees before growth begins
  As soon as the soil can be worked, before buds open · New trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Put a white trunk guard on
  At planting · New trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Water new trees on a schedule
  From planting through the first growing season · New trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune persimmons lightly in winter
  Winter, while dormant · Persimmons · Bearing trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Train young persimmons to a pyramid
  Winter, first few years · Persimmons · Young trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Dormant oil window, if persimmon scale is a problem †
  Shortly before bud swell · Persimmons · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune in late winter, before bloom
  Late winter, after the hardest cold, until a week before bloom · Apples, pears · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Head back the new tree at planting
  At planting · Apples, pears · New trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Train young trees to a central leader
  Dormant pruning time, first three to five years · Apples, pears · Young trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Cut off root suckers and water sprouts
  Dormant season · Apples · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune pomegranates lightly before spring growth
  Late winter, before bud break · Pomegranates · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune pomegranates lightly in late winter
  Late winter, before bud break · Pomegranates · Zones 9, 10
- ☐ Choose trunks while the plant is young
  Late winter, first two years · Pomegranates · Young trees · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Prune stone fruit in late winter, near bloom
  Late winter, after the coldest weather, up to bloom · Stone fruit · Zone 8 only
- ☐ Cut back new stone fruit trees at planting
  At planting · Stone fruit · New trees · Zone 8 only

† Timing only. Follow your state or provincial extension's home-orchard spray guide and the product label.

Notes

Sources: University of Minnesota; Iowa State University Extension and Outreach; Texas A&M AgriLife and 12 more (full list at the web address on the left)

Data as of 15 Nov 2026