

Pruner Mechanism Selection Matrix by Stem Diameter and Wood Condition

Companion Reference Sheet for: Bypass vs Anvil Pruners: Which Cut Keeps Stems Cleaner?
Save this PDF to your phone or print a copy for field reference. Verify local conditions and manufacturer specs before use.

Key Takeaways

- **Choose bypass pruners for live growth.** Their shearing action is less likely to crush green stems.
- **Choose anvil pruners mainly for deadwood.** Their blade presses material against a flat anvil, which can bruise living tissue.
- **Check the tool's capacity.** A branch that is too thick or resistant can lead to a poor cut or a strained grip.
- **Place the cut carefully.** Cut outside the branch collar when removing a branch, or just above a suitable bud when shortening a shoot.
- **Keep blades clean, sharp, and aligned.** Buildup or a dull edge can tear or drag through stems.
- **Use a different tool when needed.** If hand pruners will not cut comfortably, move to loppers or a pruning saw.
This [practical pruning guide](#) also covers choosing cut locations and tools.

Specification & Comparison Matrix

Pruner style	Blade action	Best suited material	Likely cut appearance	Listed cutting capacity
Bypass	One sharpened blade passes a hook, creating a shearing cut.	Live stems, green shoots, and flexible growth. It can also cut dry material when the stem and tool capacity suit the task.	Usually a more precise edge on live tissue, provided the blade is sharp, aligned, and positioned correctly.	Corona BP 3180D: 1 inch. FELCO F-2: 1 inch. gonicc Titanium Bypass: 3/4 inch.
Anvil	The cutting blade presses the stem against a flat surface.	Dry or dead wood, where bruising living tissue is less of a concern.	Can compress or bruise live tissue; dry wood may be crushed at the cut surface.	No anvil model listed.

Specification & Comparison Matrix

Bypass pruner	Blade material and features	Listed capacity	Useful point of comparison
gonicc Professional Titanium Bypass, GPPS 1003	Titanium coated SK 5 steel blade, drop forged body and handles, sap groove, non slip aluminum handles with PVC wrap.	Up to 3/4 inch	A capacity reference for smaller stems and routine pruning.
PrunePro Professional Gardening Pruning Shears	1.4031 German stainless steel blade with Teflon coating, adjustable handle span, safety lock.	Up to 1 inch	Adjustable handle span offers a way to match the tool to your grip.

Use this step by step field checklist

- ☐ **Identify the stem.** Decide whether it is living or dead, then choose bypass for live stems or anvil for suitable dry material.
- ☐ **Check the tool.** Confirm the stem fits within the pruner's stated capacity, and make sure the blade is sharp, clean, and aligned.
- ☐ **Find the cut location.** Locate the branch collar for a branch removal, or choose a suitable bud for a shortening cut.
- ☐ **Position the blade.** For bypass pruners, place the sharp edge toward the stem portion that will remain.
- ☐ **Close smoothly.** Make one controlled motion without twisting. Stop if the tool will not cut comfortably, then use loppers or a pruning saw when needed.
- ☐ **Inspect the result.** Look for crushed tissue, torn bark, or a remaining stub. Correct the tool condition or cut position before continuing.