



**HOME AND GARDEN  
INFORMATION CENTER**  
University of Maryland Extension

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12005 Homewood Road • Ellicott City, MD 21024 • 800-342-2507 • [www.hgic.umd.edu](http://www.hgic.umd.edu)

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## **Fruit Tips**

- Store pears in a refrigerator or other cool, dark location. Bring them to room temperature to ripen.
- Be sure to pick up and discard all dropped fruits as they often contain damaging insects that will continue their life cycle underneath your trees. Be sure to remove all dead and diseased plant parts from tree fruit and small fruit plantings.
- Fruit plants can be pruned anytime during dormancy, between November and March. However, it is best to wait until late winter so that the full affects of winter weather can be assessed. This is especially true for peach trees. Fireblight damage on apples and pears should be pruned out during the coldest periods in December or January. This will lessen the chance of spreading this bacterial infection. Grapes can be pruned at any time this fall or winter. Prune out the dead raspberry and blackberry canes that fruited this past summer. Fall fruiting raspberries can be mowed to the ground at this time.
- Maintain mulches around small fruit plantings unless field mouse feeding is observed. Mulch should be applied only 2-3 inches deep around fruit plants but kept away from crowns and trunks. Deep mulch makes a favorable home for voles. If the mulch is pulled up close to the plants, voles will feed on and damage bark and wood.
- Fruit trees should be sprayed after leaf drop with a dormant oil to help control scales, aphids and mites. Spray all wood thoroughly on a windless day when the temperature is expected to remain above freezing for 24 hours.

**Do you have a plant or insect pest question?  
Call the Home and Garden Information Center  
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