

PSA: Don't Top Trees!

TreePeople has been planting and caring for trees all around LA for more than 50 years and they know a thing or two about tree care.

TreePeople is spreading the word about tree “topping,” which is a pruning technique that involves cutting away all or most of the upper branches and leaves on a tree’s crown, and **can leave trees susceptible to starvation, disease, disfigurement, and even death.** In the process, it also destroys critical shade infrastructure that keeps our communities cooler.

In some cases, topping is unavoidable—like when a tall tree is planted below power lines and other types of pruning aren’t an option. But in many other cases, it’s the result of poor understanding of tree biology or misplaced cosmetic standards.

While many people believe that you need to prune trees annually, that’s simply not true. In reality, mature trees don’t need pruning unless they are **Dead, Diseased, Damaged,** or have **Deranged** branches that rub against each other. And if you feel height is an issue, other pruning techniques —like thinning or pollarding—do far less long-term damage to the tree.

Learn More

To learn more about arborist-approved pruning techniques, please visit:



treepeople.org/pruning-101



What You Can Do

- **Avoid tree topping at all costs!**
Only prune as necessary. If you need to, tell your gardener or landscaping company to stop topping!
- **Spread the word!** Tell your friends, family, neighbors, and city officials to **STOP THE TOP!**

