

Halton Region Master Gardeners

Come Grow With Us



Sambucus Nigra

I have an elderberry “Black Lace”. How do I prune it to maintain an attractive shape? I have tried pruning to the ground but it still did not develop a good shape. I have checked out the internet but found no information regarding shaping.

Roberta

Hi Roberta,

I am not sure what shape is desired, but they are most amenable to pruning. There is no single correct method for this cultivar. It depends what shape and how much space the owner has. Some take the whole plant down to a foot annually as shown in this video. If you drastically cut it back each year, however, you don't get the flowers, which are part of the plant's appeal.



<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=KsPhV0iOun4>

This should promote more bushy growth. Others do maintenance pruning only as shown here

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=04Eb-yxgv7k>

Still others do rejuvenation style pruning, removing a third of the canes, illustrated here on a different elder

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=_ikLD92cXkY

These all produce slightly different forms, so it depends what they desire.

Cheers, Cathy