

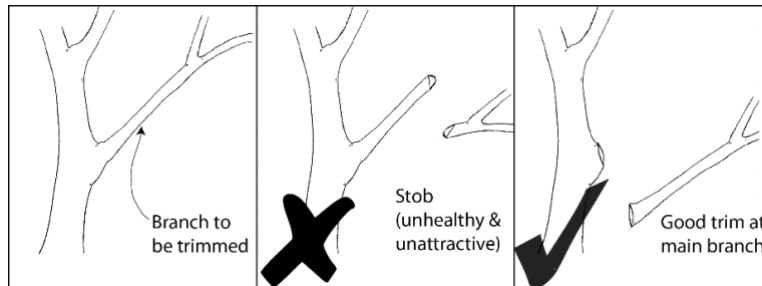
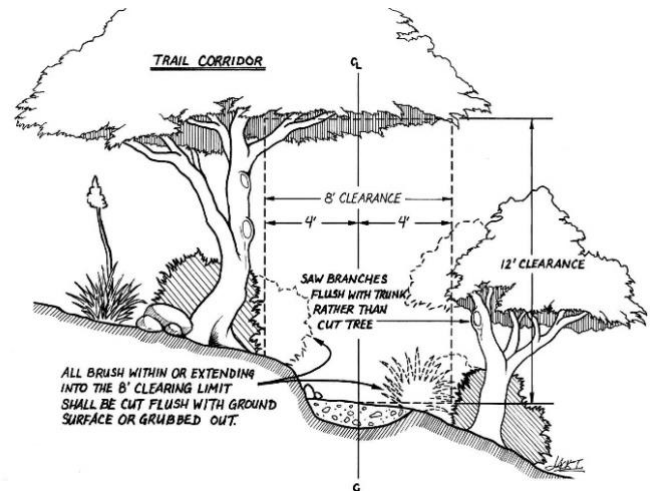


# Trail Brushing Guide

The **Trail Corridor** can be described as the managed human zone of impact in the natural world. Corridor maintenance is an important part of trail user experience and safety. A clear and open corridor encourages users to remain within our zone of impact, thus preserving the surrounding landscape. Bad brushing is easily noticed and detracts from everyone's experience, but is easily avoided with a few basic rules.

## Brushing Small Limbs and Vegetation

- ★ Know your corridor clearing limits.
- ★ Cut branch all the way back to the base of the trunk or nearby larger branch – no stobs! The illustration below shows a large stob and its ugly effects. Stobs can also be an unhealthy condition for the living plant.
- ★ Avoid 'flagpole' effect of trimming all the branches off a tree. Prune vegetation to a natural aesthetic.
- ★ Stash the slash. Always make sure to hide your cuttings out of site, including equestrians. All cuttings should be hidden behind similar plants (i.e. creosote hidden under creosote) to better blend in, on the ground to promote decay, and not left in big piles. Whenever possible, cast cuttings down slope.



## Cutting Larger Limbs

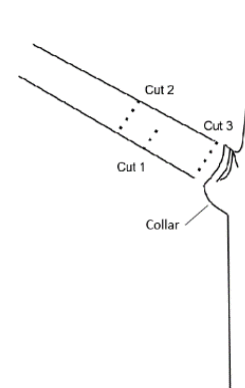
- ★ Use 3-cut method for large, heavy limbs (left) to avoid bark tearing down the tree trunk. Mesquite and juniper are especially prone to bark tearing.

Cut 1: Undercut 4"-12" from branch base, 1/4 of branch diameter

Cut 2: Overcut 4"-6" farther than cut 1 from base

Cut 3: Overcut at branch collar to finish limb removal

- ★ Preserve the limb's collar. The collar is the swollen area of overlapping wood at the base of tree limbs, and contains a barrier known as the 'branch protection zone' that slows down or blocks decay from getting into the trunk and damaging the entire tree.



## Desert Vegetation

- ★ Don't be afraid to trim desert vegetation since it grows much more quickly than you might think. If in doubt, take it out!
- ★ Succulent plants such as prickly pear and ocotillo should be trimmed as close to the ground as possible. You should never use your saw or pruners on columnar cacti.

## Helpful Web Links

- ★ USFS Trail Maintenance Notebook: <http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/pdfpubs/pdf07232806/pdf07232806dpi72.pdf>
- ★ VOAZ Brushing Video: <https://youtu.be/LASKkIiMKQE>