

**ESPALIERING  
FRUIT TREES**  
DVGC Club Meeting  
April 2014



10+ yrs

First read about it 25 yrs ago

**Espalier**

The hardest thing about it?



**Espalier – why?**

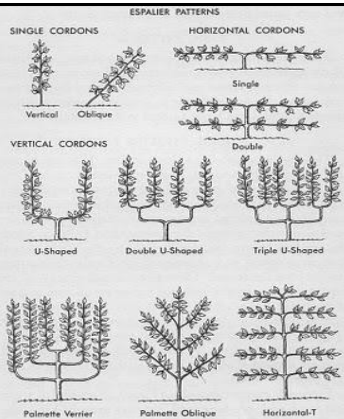
- 1) **Space Saving**  
Our small 5m x 3 ½m rect. 'orchard' – 4 espaliered apples & 3 espaliered pears, 3 blueberries, plum, gooseberry, 2 currants, blackberry and boysenberry
- 2) **Hi Quality Fruit**  
-a little less fruit, but very good quality  
-smaller trees, so can easily plant several fruit varieties to give longer growing season  
-easy to graft different varieties
- 3) **Very attractive & 'charming'**  
-great for screening areas, creating different rooms in your garden, very nice along driveway
- 4) **Easy to setup, establish and care for**  
-pruning easy and close to ground  
-no ladder needed to get to fruit

**Espalier – why?**

- 5) **Less disease**  
-more air over branches and tree  
-easy to spray trees  
-easier to keep an eye on trees and maintain health – visiting trees often to prune, tie down, admire ...
- 6) **Less shadows cast over orchard**  
-more production of trees or other fruit
- 7) **Can grow warmth loving fruit in right areas**  
-allows 'edge of zone' fruit to be tried – especially when using walls or surfaces

**Different shapes**

- do what ever you like



**Many Espalier Shapes – Art rather than Science**





**Espaliered Fruit Trees**

Need dwarfing rootstock

- I used apples and pears – can also espalier peaches, plums, nectarines, cherries, grapes, berries, ornamentals, etc.

**Apples**

- Semi Dwarf rootstocks (3 – 4 m): MM106 (most soils) & M793 (prefers clay soils) M116 (new trial in NZ)
- Dwarf rootstock – M26 (free draining soil) (1 – 1 ½m) & M9 (very small)

**Pears**

- often uses a quince rootstock for smaller tree, sometimes an intermediate graft is used

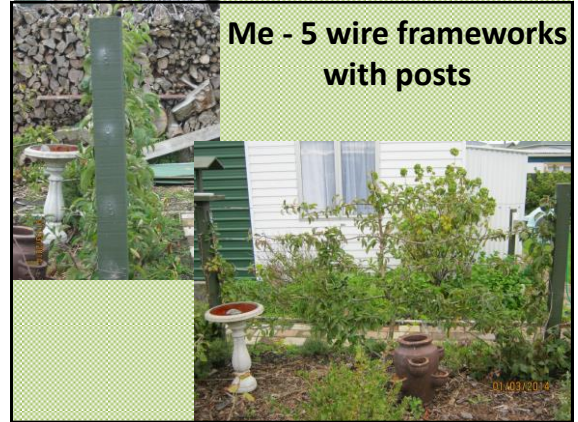
Be sure to plant graft union about ground level

- Adv's – earlier fruiting, often within 3 years



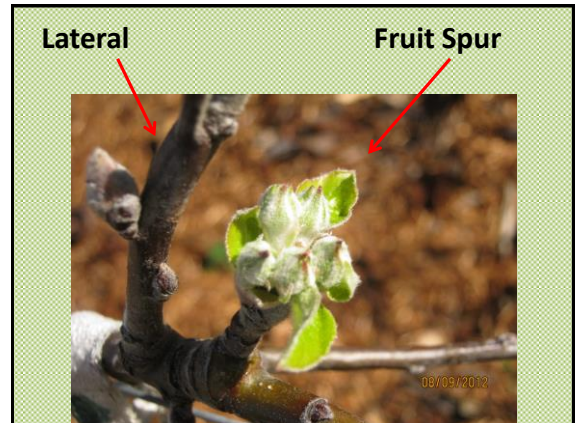
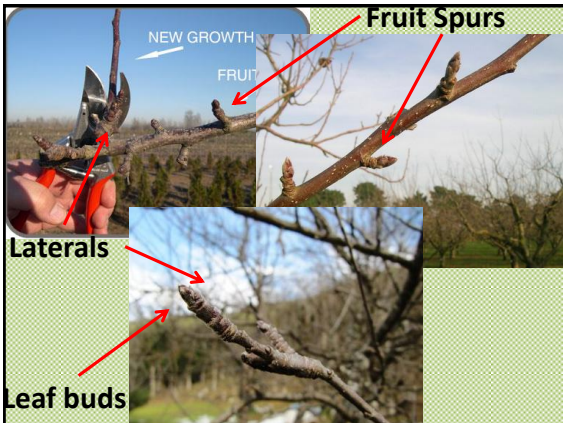
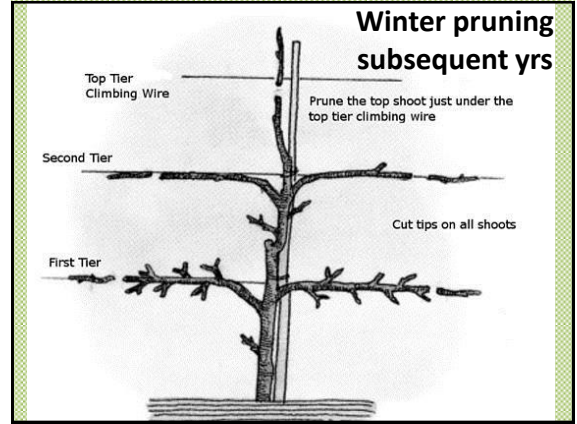
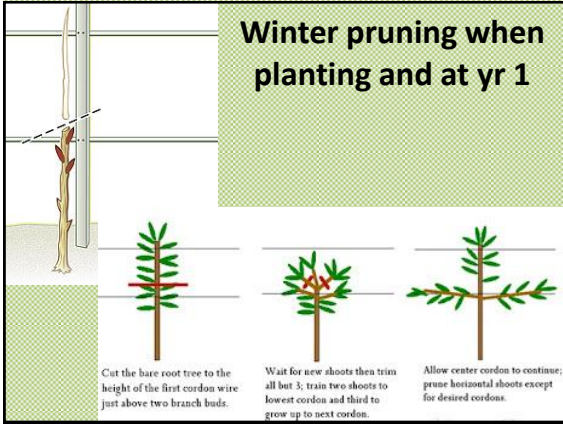
### Espalier requires a framework

- Wooden posts fine for this
- Best to have in before planting
- Can use screweyes on brick/concrete walls
- Posts/supports from 12 – 20 ft apart – depending upon rootstock
- Horiz wires about 300mm apart – 14 ga wire used turnbuckles at first, not now
- I start about 400mm from ground level, then every 300mm upwards, would use taller posts now to maximise fruit branches



### Pruning – not hard... but be consistent

- Must prune into your required shape from very beginning.
- Prune to a whip shape at desired height of first bottom wire – yr 1  
a cut of main leader should produce a central leader plus two side branches used for the shape you desire
- Winter pruning – prune, cut, back leaders in winter to form side branches and central leader up to final height  
winter prune before bud swell
- Summer pruning  
prune 2 – 3 times a growing yr (< 5 mins/tree)  
pruning back laterals (side shoots) leads to formation of fruit spurs, fruit buds = fruit!

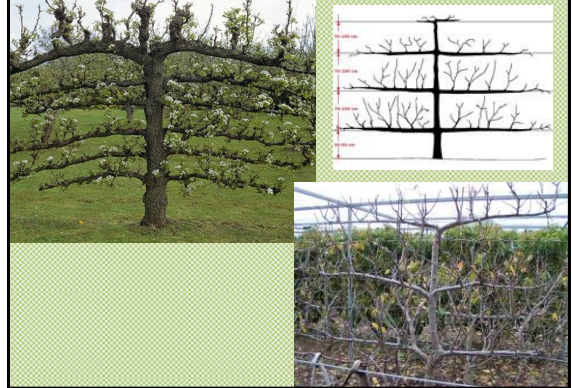


### Summer pruning

Purpose: redirecting tree energy by working on laterals

- 2 – 3 times per season
- Tie down branches
  - Redirect tree energy and produces more fruiting spurs
- Never prune fruit spurs
- Reduce size of off shoot laterals to 3 – 5 leaves
- Cut off water sprouts

### Pruning laterals to 3 – 5 leaves



### Forming your framework - tie down young branches – use soft material



### Oratia Beauty apple - Note bending branches and tie downs



### Summer pruning Oratia Beauty apple – about 5 yrs old



### Winter



### Winter Treatments

- Winter pruning for shape and branching
- Clean up any fruit from ground
- Spray tree with oil – 2 – 3 times before bud swell @ 2 week intervals

### Spring



### Spring



### Summer



### Summer



## Summer



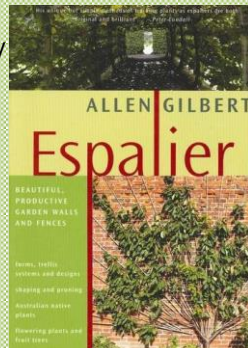
## Summer Treatments

- Pruning of laterals & water sprouts
- Tie down branches while young
- Keep an eye out for disease & bugs
- Water trees weekly in first year or two
- Keep lawn & weeds from under tree root zone

Sit back & enjoy the fruits of your labour!

## Espalier - Learning more

- 'Espalier' book at DCC library
- look at internet sites



## Espalier – Questions???

