

GRAFTING

Though grafting of trees is generally done in the spring, the material that will be grafted ON to rootstock is collected during the dormant season. Here's some tips:

What Is Grafting?

The goal of grafting and budding is to join together two living plant parts so that the whole grows as one plant. One of the two pieces supplies the roots and perhaps a length of trunk; this piece is called the **rootstock**. The other piece, the **scion**, provides the rest of the trunk, plus the stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit. Each part retains its own identity.

Grafts are usually made because a variety of plant does not grow true to seed (ie. Honeygold Apple seed will not produce Honeygold fruit) and is extremely difficult either to layer or root from cuttings. In order to maintain a high-quality line of fruit trees, cuttings must be made from a successful tree and grafted on established roots.

Success depends on:

- Plants having a close botanical relationship The closer the botanical relationship between rootstock and scion, the greater the chance of a successful take.
- It is also critical that the cambium layer (the thin layer of cells between the outer sapwood and the inner bark) of both the rootstock and scion be in close proximity and that they be held together until healing is complete.

Gathering Scion Wood

Winter is the time to gather scions for spring grafting. Consider this:

1. *Timing.* The best time of year to gather scionwood will vary with climate and type of fruit. The wood should be in the dormant stage.
2. *Authenticity.* The best wood will be taken from healthy trees that have proven themselves as productive and true to name and type. **Label each variety carefully at cutting time.** Use a water proof label and marker.
3. *Selection.* For most types of dormant grafting, one-year old wood (last season's growth) is generally considered best. Wood about a pencil diameter and 6 to 10 inches long is usually ideal.





4. Storage. Keep the wood moist but not so wet as to rot, and maintain a cool temperature to prevent premature bud-swelling. Store scions in sealed plastic bags with some moisture (moistened paper towel, peat moss) in fridge until ready to use.

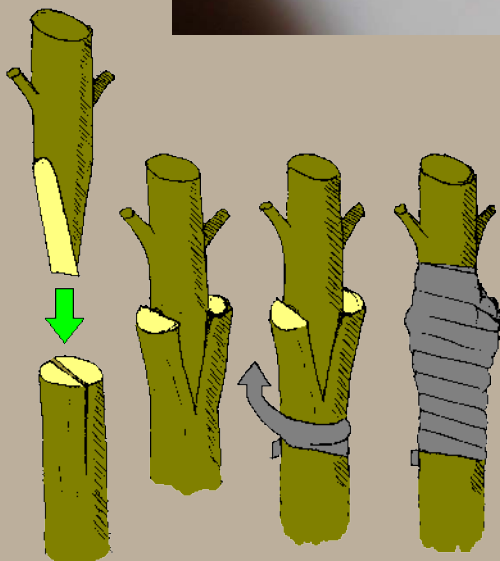
Grafting Methods

Most fruit tree propagators rely on a few simple types of grafts. The following methods can facilitate the grafting of almost any type of fruit or nut tree over a wide range of conditions.

1. Whip-and-Tongue Grafting

This is the most popular method for dormant grafting where stock and scion are of similar diameter. This is suited to grafting indoors and starting rootstock & new scions.

[Watch a video on Whip and Tongue Grafting](#)



2. Cleft Grafting

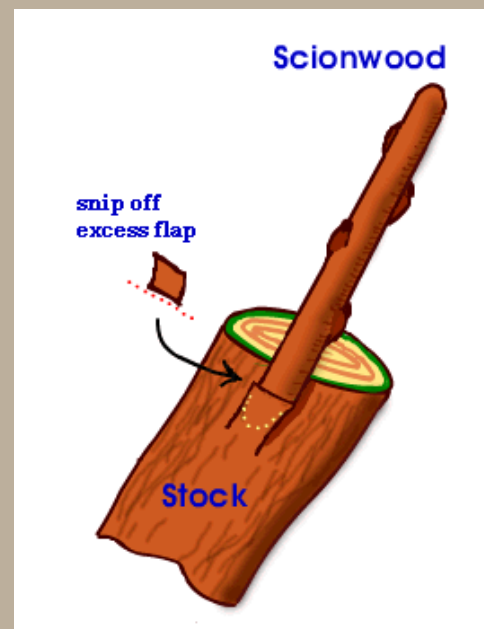
Most often used for dormant grafting where the stock is larger than the scion. This is a good method for topworking older trees to create new varieties.

[Watch a video on Cleft Grafting](#)

3. Bark Grafting.

Used, like cleft grafting, where the stock is larger than the scion; must be done later in the season when the bark is slipping freely. This is frequently used with walnut and persimmon.

[Watch a video on bark grafting](#)



Grafting Supplies:

Parafilm Grafting Tape is a fast and easy-to-use product that makes plant grafting and budding efforts a breeze. Apply the tape over the graft to hold the union secure until the graft takes hold.



Grafting Knife

These small knives are easy to handle and have the razor sharp blade required to make precision cuts for grafts. The razor sharp folding blade of our Bahco Grafting Knife is ideal for cutting grafts and bark.

The folding brass spatula is for lifting the bark to enable the graft to be inserted.



\$49.99

Probably the most common reason for graft failure is allowing air to dry out the graft. To prevent this, all cracks, wounds, and the cut end of the grafting stick should receive a liberal coating of a sealing compound.

Want even more tips? Follow the link below to extensive information from the University of Minnesota with easy to follow, step by step instructions on each type of graft.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/components/dg0532c.html>