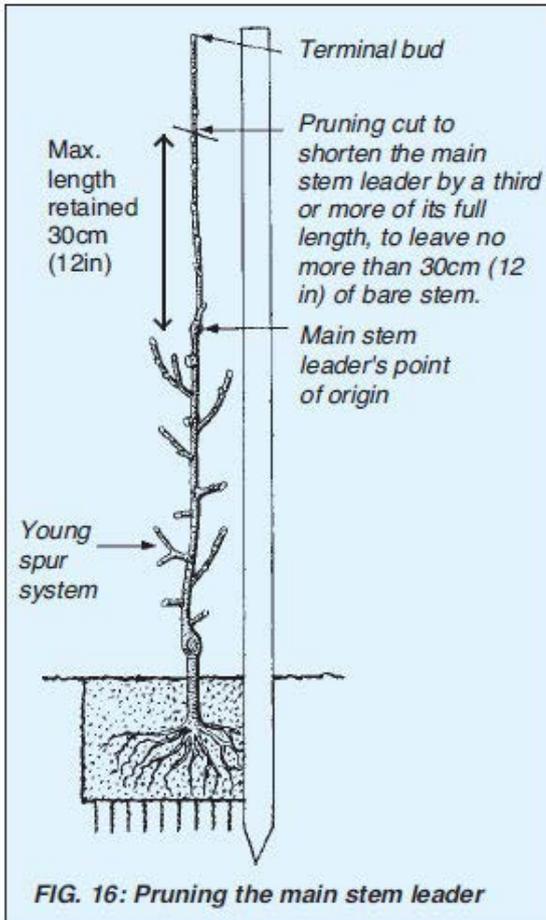


GUIDE TO PRUNING & TRAINING MINARETTE APPLES & PEARS

Minarettes are supplied already pruned; further pruning will not be required before midsummer. With proper management a Minarette will continue to grow as a single column to about 1.8-2.5m (6-8ft) high with short fruit bearing spurs up and down its length. A small amount of trimming of the shoots to make sure it keeps to the desired size and shape will be necessary during the summer, as well as a minimum amount of pruning in the winter or early spring. This will help to ensure that the tree bears well-coloured, good sized, ripe fruit every year. With Minarettes practically all the pruning is carried out in the summer with the purpose of retarding their growth and encouraging the formation of fruit buds.

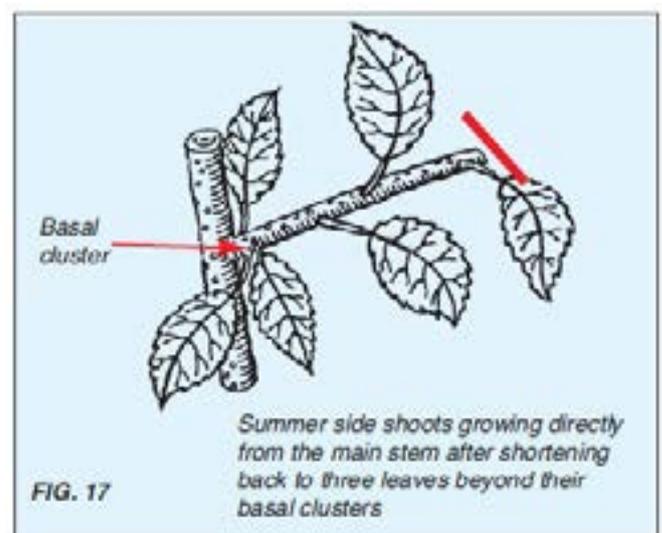


PRUNING THE MAIN STEM LEADER

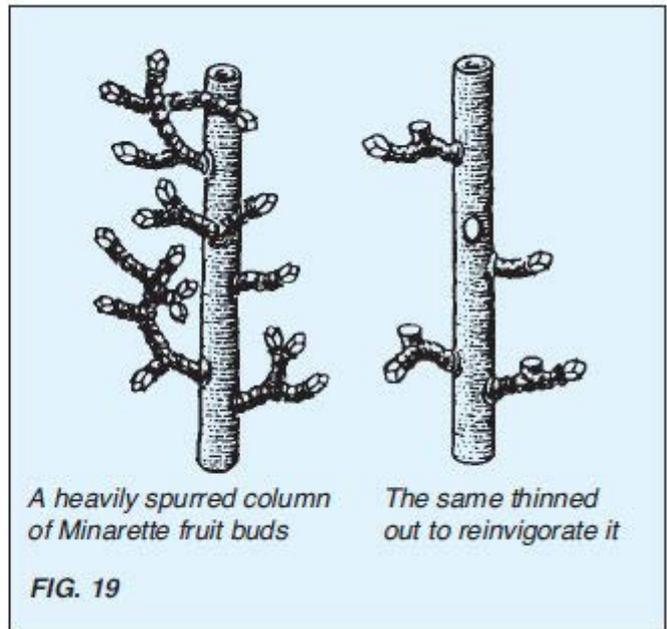
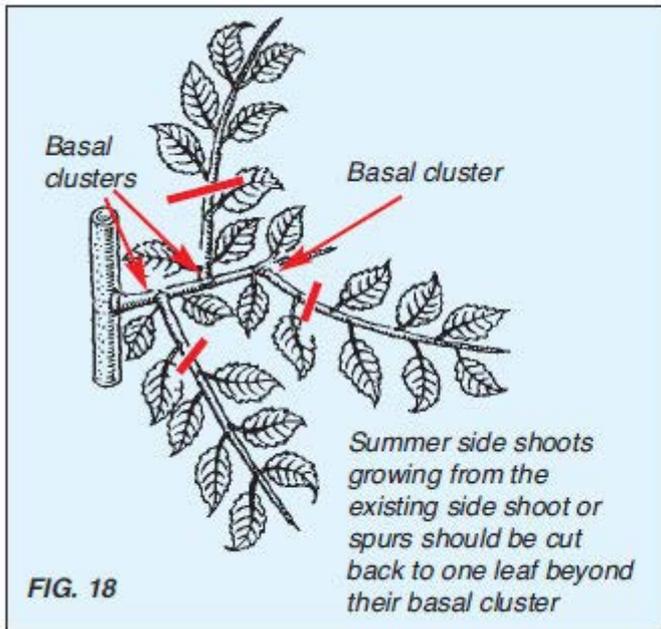
The term 'main stem leader' refers to the new growth which leads a Minarette upwards at the top of the tree (see fig. 16). The leader of a Minarette should be tied to a stake or cane at intervals throughout the summer months whilst it is soft and pliable and still growing, to keep it upright and from growing out at an angle to the main stem. This leader is only pruned in the winter or early spring and involves the removal of one third or more of the growth it made during the previous summer. It should be cut to a bud on the opposite side to the stake. The length of bare stem left after pruning should be no more than 30cm (12in). Once the tree has reached the required height, the leader should be shortened during winter or early spring to about 1cm (1/2in) from the point of origin. The leader is not pruned during the summer months. Pruning of the leader encourages the furnishment of side shoots along its length from which fruiting spurs are made.

PRUNING THE SIDE SHOTS

This task is carried out in the summer. A Minarette will start to produce these side shoots from May onwards. The side shoot from a Minarette apple tree will have matured by early to mid-August in the south of England and approximately ten days later in the north. With pears, the shoots will have matured a week or so earlier. When this stage has been reached, summer pruning should commence. The shoots will have woody bases with a basal cluster of leaves and then light green leaves from the young shoots. Any shoots which are less than 20cm (8in) in length should not be pruned. New shoots growing **directly from the main stem** which are



more than 20cm (8in) in length should be cut back to about three leaves above the basal cluster (see fig. 17). Any shoots growing **from existing side shoots or spurs** which are similarly in excess of 20cm (8in) in length should be cut back to **one leaf**, about 2.5cm (1in) or more beyond their basal cluster (see fig. 18). The basal cluster is easy to recognise — it is a small cluster of two to four closely spaced leaves at the base of a shoot.



THINNING THE FRUIT SPURS

As the tree gets older it may be necessary to thin out the number of fruiting spurs, if there are too many (see fig. 19). They should be thinned out during winter months. Reducing the number of fruit buds increases the size of fruit but it must not be overdone.