

“Gosho-sukashi”Pine-Trimming Tools

Stately pine trees grace the broad lawns of Kyoto Gyoen. The ends of the branches are difficult to reach, so gardeners use special tools to prune them, with sickle or saw blades mounted on the ends of bamboo poles that may extend as much as 4 to 5 meters. This kind of pruning technique is unique to Kyoto Gyoen.

① Used for lifting up and inserting a cut on the underside of the branch.

② Used for pulling the branch towards the cutter and cutting branches.

Long-shaft sickle

The long-shaft sickle is a pruning tool that is used only in Kyoto. It has a sharpened blade on both sides, so it can be used for lifting up and inserting a cut on the underside of the branch, and then for pulling the branch towards the cutter and cutting branches.

Long-shaft saw

Pruning saw

A variety of saws are used to cut large branches. The narrow tip of this pruning saw can fit into tight spaces.

The Kyoto Gyoen-style pruning technique has the aesthetic aim of retaining the natural shape of the tree. The main principle of this style of pruning is to be so subtle that people scarcely notice that a tree has been trimmed. The changes are so delicate that the only thing an untrained observer might notice is a small pile of fallen branches or leaves at the base of the tree.