



# Rose Planting and Care

The rose is known as a lovely addition to the garden. It's also known to be high maintenance. The secret of success is to give them regular attention and provide them with the most optimal growing conditions that you can. Here are some guidelines for planting, growing, and maintaining beautiful roses.

## *Location and Spacing:*

Plant roses in full sun where they will receive at least 6 hours of light a day. Most bush type roses should be spaced at least 3 to 4 feet apart. Space climbers 6 to 10 feet apart.



## *Planting:*

If your soil is very poorly drained, plant roses higher than the ground surface on a mound to facilitate better drainage. Make sure plants are well-watered before planting.

1. Dig a wide hole about 3 times the size of the rootball. The hole should be about the depth of the rootball. Rough up the sides of the hole so there are no slick surfaces. Toss the dirt as you dig it into a large container or wheelbarrow.
2. Create a mix of 50% native soil, 40% pine bark soil conditioner, and 10% organic material (or more for sandy soils) such as composted manure or mushroom compost in your container or wheelbarrow.
3. Carefully remove the plant from the container and set it in the hole making sure the top 1/8th of the rootball is above the grade of the surrounding soil if you have clay, and at the grade if you have sandy soil. If the roots are compacted and tangled, gently loosen them by hand.
4. Backfill the hole with the soil mix and build up soil in a mound up to the level of the rootball. Make sure that the soil is 1-2" inches below the bud graft union (the knotty, burlled part that the shoots are coming from). This will help prevent suckers coming from below the graft. Create a 3" lip of soil around the edge of the planting hole to catch water.
5. Water thoroughly with a diluted solution of Ferti-lome Root Stimulator.

## *Mulching:*

Mulching conserves water, insulates plant roots from temperature extremes, and reduces weeds and the spread of soil-borne disease. We recommend a 2" layer of mulch such as pine bark or cedar.

## *Watering and Fertilizing:*

Roses require regular fertilizer and water. Water deeply and soak the root area once or twice a week, preferably in the morning, if there has been no rain. Avoid getting water on foliage as it can promote disease. The exact amount of water needed will vary depending on weather conditions, natural rainfall, plant size, soil structure, and sun duration/intensity. Use a fertilizer formulated for roses and feed according to label instructions. Generally, roses should be fed monthly during the growing season, usually April to mid August. Also, a couple shovelfuls of good compost spread under each rose's mulch layer at the beginning of the season will promote beneficial soil organisms as well as feed the plant.

## *Spraying:*

Roses are prone to a number of diseases and pests. A healthy, well-cared for plant is better able to resist attack than a neglected one. Keep roses well fed and watered, and regularly remove dead wood, fallen leaves, and spent blooms. During the dormant season, right after annual pruning, spray roses with dormant season horticultural oil and lime sulfur. This will destroy many disease organisms as well as overwintering insect eggs. The fact remains, however, that to control disease and insects on many hybrid roses a regular spraying regimen during the growing season will most likely be required. The best time to spray is in the early morning before the sun hits the plants. A good insecticide is Bon-Neem™ which also has some antifungal properties. If a fungal problem develops, use Fung-onil™, or the organic Serenade Disease Control™, or a similar fungicide. We also recommend Bayer All-in-One Rose & Flower Care™. This is a concentrate that you only use once per month and apply at the base of the plant. It contains an insecticide, a fungicide and a light fertilizer. If you have a problem you're unsure of, bring in a sample to the nursery for diagnosis and a treatment plan.



## *Pruning:*

Pruning extends the life of your roses, improves flower quality, regulates size and shape, and reduces disease. It is a good idea to have a bucket of 10% bleach solution to dip your pruners in between cuts in order to prevent the spread of disease. Bypass-type pruners and loppers are recommended for hand pruning on roses and other woody plants.

**For annual pruning**, prune in spring just as the buds begin to swell prior to the unfolding of vegetative growth, usually late February or early March. Remove all basal suckers (shoots growing out from under the knotty, burlled bud graft union at the base of the plant) and dead, damaged, or diseased wood. Gently flake off old bark from the graft union to help promote new shoots. Remove all inward-growing branches and any that are pencil size or smaller to form a neat, open-centered plant. Remove canes that are 4 years or older leaving about 3 to 5 canes of about ½" diameter for hybrid teas, and 5 to 7 canes for floribundas and grandifloras. On the remaining canes, reduce them down to leave at least 3 to 5 outward facing buds on each cane. Make all cuts at an angle about ¼" above an outward facing growth bud.

On **climbing roses**, don't prune for the first 2 to 3 years except to remove dead, diseased, damaged or crossing canes and any suckers. After 2 to 3 years, remove older gray and weak canes leaving at least 3 to 5 vigorous canes. On once-blooming types (like Lady Banks roses), prune *after* spring bloom. Prune climbers every few years.

**'Knock Out' roses** can be pruned in late winter or early spring. Remove any dead wood and cut large canes down to about 24-30" tall (or 2' lower than the desired height of the shrub) making a slanted cut about ¼" above an outward-facing bud. The cut should slant away from the bud. Study the shape of the shrub and make cuts to even it out, if necessary. Remove any diseased and/or spindly growth in the center of the plant.

**Seasonal Pruning** - Roses should be "deadheaded" regularly. Prune away old blooms once they are spent. The cut should be placed ¼" above an outward facing set of leaves that contains 5 or 7 leaflets. You can control cane height by choosing any set of 5 or 7 leaves along the stem to make the cut. In general, do not remove more than one-third of the plant during the growing season.

## *Easy Roses*

*These roses do well with little spraying:*

- Knock Out** - light cherry red, shrub
- Pink Knock Out** - medium pink, shrub
- Lady Banks rose** - white or yellow, vigorous climber
- Zepherine Droughin** - cherry pink, antique shrub

