



LANDSCAPE
GARDENING
SERIES



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Rose Information



Types of Roses

Hybrid Teas These roses form long, narrow buds on straight stems. They are repeat bloomers and encompass a large range of colors.

Grandifloras This group of roses is a cross between the Hybrid Tea rose and the Floribunda Rose. Their flowers are borne on long stems in small clusters and the plants may grow between 3' and 6' tall.

Floribundas Floribunda roses combine the best aspects of their parent plants: the Hybrid Tea rose and Polyantha rose. They receive their flower form and foliage from the Hybrid Tea while taking after the Polyantha in increased hardiness and exuberance of blooms.

Climbing roses Climbing roses vary greatly in their size. They generally have a heavy spring bloom followed by scattered blooms throughout the season. Large flowered climbing roses differ from Ramblers in that they have fewer, yet larger blooms (4-6 inches in size) and are not quite as vigorous growers.

Miniature roses These roses form a cute little twiggy bush which is usually under 18" tall. The flowers are usually very pretty and the plant will bloom in all seasons. These are great roses for containers.

Shrub roses Shrub roses encompass a wide range of rose types. Many Shrub Roses are good for screens, hedges, and mass planting. Virtually all shrub rose bushes are repeat blooming.

David Austin roses English Roses, often called David Austin Roses, were introduced by the English rose hybridizer David Austin. David Austin Roses are bred by crossing old garden roses with more modern roses to achieve the superb fragrance, delicacy and charm of the old-style blooms combined with the repeat flowering characteristics and wide color range of modern roses.

Old garden roses (OGRs) Old Garden roses are the predecessors of today's roses. They are a diverse group. Old Garden Roses comprise a multifaceted group that in general are easy to grow, disease-resistant and winter-hardy with most providing fragrance for the garden and home.

Fertilizing is how we replenish the nutrients consumed by the plant. Plants should be fed if they are to remain healthy and produce good blooms.

There are two ways to feed the plant - with organic material or inorganic fertilizer. Organic materials such as manure, compost or meals (blood, fish, soy, kelp, etc.) feed the soil with additional bacteria, which, in turn, break down into inert mineral salts. These mineral salts are the compounds the plant will absorb as food. Inorganic fertilizers are generally faster acting than organic materials, since they require only dissolving in water to become available to the plant. However, organic materials are essential for a well-conditioned soil.

Some Rosarians prefer to use organic fertilizers; most Rosarians use both.

All products labeled as fertilizer must have, by law, the percentages of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium listed in that order (N-P-K) on the container. If a granular commercial fertilizer is used, choose one with a balance between the three main chemical ingredients and, if possible, one that also contains trace elements.

Soil bacteria are dormant until the soil warms up in the spring; therefore, too early an application of fertilizer in the soil is wasted. Foliar feeding is another option that can be done several times during the growing season as a supplement to your regular fertilization program.

When using package fertilizers, follow the package label as to how much granular fertilizer to apply in April, June, and August. Do not apply any fertilizer containing nitrogen after mid-September. Always water before and after applying granular fertilizer. If dry fertilizer gets on the leaves, rinse it off immediately.

Alfalfa pellets or meal contain a valuable growth hormone and make an excellent organic supplement. Use about one cup per plant worked lightly into the soil in the spring.

Some people use Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate). There is no scientific evidence that Epsom salt serves any benefit for the rose plant. Use very conservatively, if at all, to prevent ground water contamination from runoff.

Fertilizers are of little value if your soil is out of pH balance. A pH range of 6.0 to 6.8 is best for roses. Test your soil occasionally and correct if necessary.

Roses benefit from a yearly organic mulch of two to four inches and weekly deep watering. Do not fertilize newly planted plants until after their first bloom.

Most bugs are good; a few pests provide food for the "good guys." However, sometimes the "bad guys" get out of hand and you might need to take action. **Less-toxic insecticides**, such as horticultural oils, insecticidal soaps and pyrethrins kill only those insects they contact, but are quite effective at reducing pest populations. Systemic insecticides are absorbed into the plant tissue and kill sucking insects such as aphids for a 3-week period. These products also contain a contact poison that kills chewing insects on contact. Since insecticides kill good as well as bad insects, they should be used **only** when absolutely necessary.

Pesticides are products containing chemicals or other agents designed to kill or disable pests. Herbicides destroy vegetation, miticides control mites, insecticides kill insects, and fungicides combat fungi. Some products combine a fungicide and an insecticide.

Fungicides are preventative, not curative. A regular spray schedule is recommended for fungus protection. An all-purpose fungicide will prevent mildew, blackspot, and rust. Some are more effective with specific diseases, so Rosarians often rotate products in their spray program.

Early morning spraying allows the foliage time to dry. Be sure to spray the underside of the foliage, where most insects live and spores germinate. After a spray material is mixed with water, use it within a couple of hours; it loses effectiveness if kept overnight or longer. Spraying should begin right after pruning time; fungi and insects have been dormant and protected during winter, and by pruning time are becoming active and vulnerable to pesticides.

Choose a sprayer that produces a fine mist. For a few plants, a pistol-grip sprayer will work.

For more plants, choose a plastic pump sprayer; these range from 1 quart to 2 gallons in capacity. The pesticide products on the market have undergone stringent testing and have been approved by the EPA. They are safe if you follow directions. Read and follow all labeling directions. It is illegal to use a pesticide in a manner not in accordance with the label instructions.

Pruning improves appearance, stimulates growth, aids in disease management, and controls the quality and quantity of bloom. Pruning removes the parts of the plant that are unproductive, dead, damaged, or diseased. Plants are always improved and never killed by pruning. Incorrect pruning is better than no pruning at all. Unpruned rose plants will produce some early inferior blooms on short stems. Production will cease after the first bloom and repeat bloom will most likely not occur. Light pruning of most hybrid teas results in tall, spindly plants, which produce smaller blooms. Moderate to hard pruning is preferable and produces fewer, but larger blooms. Moderate pruning removes 1/2 to 2/3 of the plant; hard pruning leaves only 3-4 canes, 8-12" long. Prune strong plants moderately and weak growers severely. Roses which bloom on last year's growth, however, such as climbers, and many Old Garden Roses, should be lightly pruned or thinned only, removing old, unproductive canes.

Generally, February 22 until mid-March is the optimum pruning time in the Greater Seattle area. Nature's indicator is when the forsythia is blooming in your neighborhood. It is sensitive to light and temperature and blooms at the optimal time. Use scissor-type, bypass shears when pruning. A keyhole saw with fine teeth will reduce tearing of the bark in tight areas, or on large canes. Anvil type shears will crush or bruise canes, leading to infection.

Cut approximately 1/4" above a bud eye. Cutting closer will injure or kill the bud and cutting farther away will leave a section of dead cane to attract insects and disease spores.

With modern roses, the pith color at the pruning cut should be a greenish white. Any brown coloration in the pith indicates a dead or dying cane; the cane should be pruned to a lower bud eye, clear to the crown, if necessary, in order to find live pith. Healthy looking canes should be pruned first, so that if the pith is dark and the canes must be removed, the smaller, older, or crossing canes will still be available.

Pruning to an outside bud will force growth outward, opening the center of the plant to sunlight and air circulation. Pruning to an inside eye on sprawling varieties or those in a restricted space will force growth inward and keep them in check.

When choosing a place to **plant** your rose, sunlight, good drainage, and an area with no intruding roots is recommended. While exposure to high winds is not recommended, a location with good air circulation will reduce blackspot and mildew. If existing drainage is bad, consider installing raised beds.

If possible, the rose bed should be prepared, soil amended, and holes dug in advance of planting so that settling of the soil can take place. It is best to spade up and amend the soil in the entire bed, rather than just digging holes in existing soil.

Organic material is difficult to add to the root zone after planting, so turn it into the soil before planting. You can use compost or other well-aged material. A little organic material is good; a lot is not. Keep the ratio of organic material to about a third.

Bare root roses should be soaked overnight in water before planting and the roots should not be exposed to drying sun or wind. Snip root ends to promote hair root growth and remove damaged or crowded canes prior to planting.

Planting holes should be deep and wide enough so that the roots fit without bending or crossing. Phosphate fertilizer - super phosphate or bone meal - is the only material that should be placed in the planting hole. Do not add a fertilizer with nitrogen, as this will burn the roots.

A mound of soil in the hole's center will stabilize the plant while it is positioned. The plant should be positioned so the bud union will be 1-2 inches above the eventual ground level.

Roots should be spread naturally, while fingers work soil up into the cavity beneath the crown. Gently fill the hole with soil, as the plant is held upright. When 2/3 full, fill the hole with water and let drain. Continue filling with soil and firm gently with hands. Water again.

Remove the nametag and place it on a stake. Nametag wires can strangle an expanding cane. Mound soil over the canes to pruning height to conserve moisture. Remove the soil mound, in about two to four weeks or when new growth emerges, with a gentle stream of water.

New plants require deep and frequent watering the first season to establish a strong root system.

Do not fertilize newly planted plants until after their first bloom.