



ROSE CULTURE

Over 150 species of the genus *Rosa* have been identified throughout the Northern Hemisphere. These have been hybridized to create more than 1000 varieties. Therefore, a classification system has been devised to differentiate among these roses. They are divided into three broad types: species or shrub roses, old garden roses, and modern roses.

Roses that don't fit any other classification are listed as **shrub roses**. The American Rose Society lists the English and Buck roses in this category. Many come on their own rootstock and are therefore hardier than modern roses.

Old Garden Roses are varieties clearly identifiable before 1867, when the first hybrid tea rose appeared. Many are noted for their powerful fragrance, disease resistance and hardiness. The major groups include Gallica (French), Damask, Alba, Centifolia (cabbage), Moss, China, Bourbon and Hybrid Perpetual.

Modern Roses are rose groups introduced after 1867. The four main groups include hybrid teas, polyanthas, floribundas and grandifloras. The most popular class of rose is the *hybrid tea*, which produces large blooms, one to a stem, that are suitable for cutting. *Grandifloras* are very closely related, with tea-type flowers borne singly or in long stemmed clusters. *Floribundas* are useful for informal hedges, borders and massing and are noted for producing large quantities of flowers (although smaller than teas) in clusters on vigorous and bushy plants. *Polyanthas* have similar landscape uses, with flowers less than two inches across, carried in large sprays on vigorous and numerous canes.

Additional classes of roses include *climbing or rambling roses* with long vigorous canes that cannot support their own weight and must be tied to a trellis or similar support. *Tree roses* are bush varieties grafted to a tall sturdy rootstock. They are useful as accents in formal garden design, but difficult to overwinter in cold weather areas. *Miniature roses* are hardier than hybrid teas and make good border edgings or rock garden and container plants, especially when raised for closer viewing. The blooms are small but plants can range in height from 6 to 30 inches with climbers reaching five feet.

SITE SELECTION

A minimum of six hours of sun is necessary, preferably in the morning. Soil should be well drained, slightly acidic (6.0 - 6.5), with a high humus content. Good air circulation discourages diseases, but avoid very windy sites. Do not plant near trees or shrubs whose roots will compete for water or nutrients. However, you may underplant roses with shallow-rooted annuals such as alyssum or lobelia. Allow enough space between roses to weed and prune.

PLANTING

Soak bare root plants overnight, but not more than 24 hours. Dig a hole 12-18 inches deep and wide enough that roots can spread out naturally. Trim off broken or damaged roots. Mound soil in center of hole to support roots, keeping the graft or bud union (knobby area on stem) 2-4 inches below ground level to provide winter protection. If roots are very long, prune to fit the planting hole.

For potted roses, set the intact root ball into the planting hole, just loosening the sides of ball if roots are showing. Miniature roses have no graft, so set them slightly deeper than they originally grew. Fill hole halfway with soil, then fill remaining space with water and allow to drain. Check level of bud union and correct if necessary. Fill in remainder of hole and firm gently by hand. Mound 8-10 inches of soil or mulch loosely over canes to prevent drying out until new growth emerges. When leaf buds begin to swell, gradually lower mound to ground level. Don't fertilize until after the first bloom cycle. Loosen or remove metal wire holding nametag to prevent cane injury.

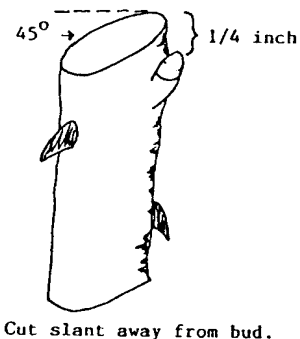
FERTILIZER

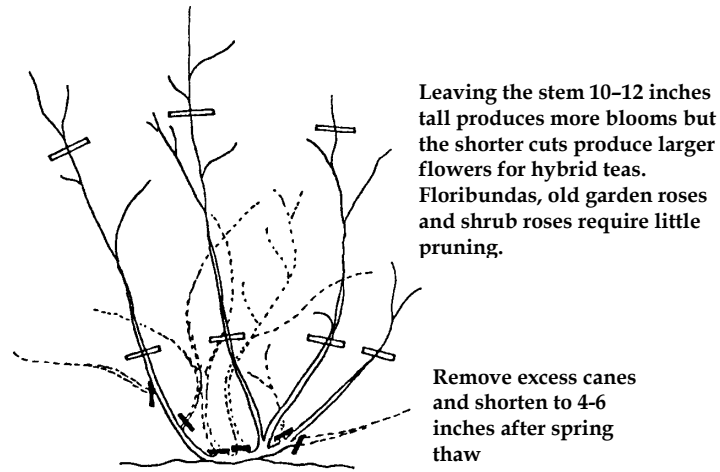
Apply mid-April to May. There are many choices of fertilizer, including:

- a. Apply 1-cup super phosphate per rose bush every other year (dig into the soil in 4 spots).
- b. Apply 1-cup alfalfa meal or 2 cups alfalfa pellets per bush (scratch into the soil).
- c. As the soil warms in May, apply ½ cup 16-16-16 granular fertilizer per bush or 1 cup of 16-16-16 per climbing rose (scratch into the soil, avoiding direct contact with cane).
- d. Apply ½ cup Epsom salts per bush (scratch into the soil).
- e. Reapply ½ cup of 16-16-16 granular fertilizer per bush by mid-July (scratch into soil, avoiding direct contact with cane).

SPRING CARE

Gradually remove protective mulch and soil mounds as soon as daytime temperatures remain above 20°F. Prune away all but 3 to 6 canes on hybrid teas - fewer canes will result in fewer but larger blooms. Vigorous bushes will benefit from thinning, which provides good air circulation and helps prevent fungal disease. Remove all dead, diseased and damaged wood. Remove spindly canes, crossing branches and blind shoots (no terminal flower bud, just leaves). Cut all canes back to clear white wood. Prune to an outward pointing bud unless the bush tends to sprawl.





SUMMER CARE

Many rose fertilizers are available. Choose one that includes trace elements as well as nitrogen, phosphate and potash. Follow label directions. What may work with one type of soil might not be right for roses in a different site. Roses are heavy feeders but require a fertilizer with a lower nutrient value consistently throughout the early growing season rather than one heavy feeding. Examples are:

- Combination fertilizers and insecticides. Follow label directions carefully. Overdoing these materials can result in plant damage.
- General rose granular fertilizer. Formulations include 10-5-5, 8-12-4, or 6-10-4. Follow label directions. Apply at early bud break and again just after one or two peak flushes of bloom. Peak bloom usually falls in June, late July and September. In Zone 5, July 30 should be the last feeding. A late summer application will encourage tender growth that will not harden off before freezing weather.

Fertilize miniature roses at half-strength. Roses with only one flush of bloom, such as climbers and some bush roses, can be fertilized at bud break and after the blooms are finished.

Water deeply once or twice a week. Check soil 24 hours after watering - it should be moist 12-18 inches deep. If you must water overhead, do so in the morning so the foliage is dry before sunset.

Apply 2 to 4 inches of mulch, using compact leaf mold or dried grass to help retain moisture and discourage weeds. Leave space around the base of each plant.

SUMMER PRUNING:

- Deadhead regularly (remove spent flowers). This allows the plant to produce more flowers rather than set seed.
- Remove growth that is growing toward the center of plant to allow better air circulation.
- Remove weak or twiggy growth and any dead or drying stems.
- Remove sucker growth coming from below grafted bud.
- Prune as necessary to shape bush.

Weed as shallowly as possible to avoid damaging roots.

PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL:

- Plant roses with known disease resistance.
- Observe regularly to identify problem before they become severe.
- Common insects are thrips, spider mites, aphids, and leaf cutter bees. Strong sprays of water can often eliminate these insects. If this doesn't control them apply an appropriate insecticide.
- Common diseases are mildew and blackspot. Identify early. Give adequate treatment if they appear.

FALL CARE

- Maintain but reduce watering.
- Stop deadheading.
- Watch for spider mites and mildew. Give adequate control if they appear.

WINTER CARE

Rake off and destroy all fallen leaves to prevent overwintering of diseases and insects. Mound 8-10 inches of soil around bush for winter protection. Bring this soil from another area far enough from roses so their feeder roots are not disturbed. If you strip the foliage be careful not to leave open wounds and do not do so until the plant is dormant. If you are using a wire mesh or newspaper collar, fill the remainder of the space with leaves, straw or pine needles in late November after the surface of the ground is frozen. Hardy Rugosa varieties and miniature roses do not need winter protection. Potted plants and tree roses should be moved to a cold but frost-free building during dormancy. Inspect these plants weekly for insect and disease problems.

REFERENCES

Roses for the Inland Northwest - available at the Spokane County Extension Office. Call (509) 477-2048 for information.

All About Roses Ortho books

Sunset Roses Lane Publishing Company