



Rose Care



Planting Guidelines

When to Plant - Container roses may be planted in Spring, Summer, or early Fall. Diligent watering is mandatory no matter what season you plant a rose.

Preparing the Soil - Roses prefer fertile, well drained, moisture-holding soil. The first step in preparing the soil for your roses is to make sure to add organic matter if your soil is heavy or sandy to create a good balanced soil for your rose. It is important to ensure that the soil drains well enough to allow air to reach the roots and holds water for your rose to use.

Digging the hole - The hole for your rose should be equal to the depth of the root-ball and 1 1/2 times the container width. All roses benefit from being planted deep. It is critical to plant grafted roses, so the bud union is 2-4" below the surface to improve winter survival.

Planting - Water the rose thoroughly before planting. Remove container (yes, fiber pots too) and check to see if the rose is root bound. A rose that is root bound should have its roots gently loosened. Place the rose in the hole and backfill. Use water to settle soil and eliminate air pockets then add more soil as needed.


General Care

Watering- Watering should begin in the spring when the ground has almost completely thawed. Your rose will not need as much water in the spring as it does in mid or late summer. In the fall ease back on watering to help your rose prepare for winter. Watering may be the most important part of maintaining your roses. A rose needs moisture for good blooming. Soil content, wind and temperature will help determine when and how much to water your roses. Roses need twice as much water at 90° F as they do at 70° F. Rainfall may not supply all the water your rose needs. Check your roses daily. If the soil is dry several inches below the soil line it is time to water. Also, if you notice buds, flowers, or foliage wilting, water immediately. When watering the water should penetrate through the root zone to a depth of at least 18". To check for adequate watering poke a stick into the watered soil. If the stick goes in easily through the soil the soil is wet enough. If it does not easily move, the soil is still too dry. Hand watering of soil is preferred. If watering with a sprinkler it is best to do it in the morning. Wet foliage invites fungal diseases.

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Mulching - Mulching is placing a layer of organic material on top of the soil. This helps slow evaporation, protects roots, keeps them cool, and suppresses weed growth. Mulch can include compost, rotted manure, pine needles, shredded leaves, or grass clippings.

Fertilizing - Roses are heavy feeders. The first fertilization of the year should take place just after spring pruning and after all winter protection has been removed, usually late April or early May. Frost can damage lush new growth so don't fertilize too late. As a rule, fertilizing of roses should not take place after mid-August in Michigan.

Pruning - It is better to prune a rose at least once a year than to not prune at all. Pruning removes any dead, diseased, damaged, interfering, crossing, or rubbing canes. It shapes the rose and keeps large roses from growing out of bounds.

Tools - Hand pruners, loppers and a pruning saw are all useful tools for pruning roses. Puncture proof leather gloves are also desirable. The cleaner and sharper the cut the better your rose will heal. A solution of 1 part bleach and 9 parts water is effective for cleaning tools. When cutting diseased canes, you should clean the tool before it is used for another cut.

When - It is best to prune most roses in early spring when the rose breaks the winter dormant stage. Note- once blooming roses are not pruned heavily in the spring. Rather they are pruned after flowering is finished.

Where - Most pruning cuts will be made just above a bud. Buds are above where a leaf was attached to the cane. Most buds can be identified as little half circle bulges on the cane.

How-Remove any dead diseased or damaged canes. If the rose is mature (more than 2-3 yrs. Old) remove two or more of the oldest unproductive canes. Don't remove too many! Some roses that grow vigorously and bloom on new growth may benefit from further pruning. A severe pruning is recommended yearly for hybrid teas, grandifloras, floribundas, and miniatures.

Things To Remember About Roses

Water - Roses are heavy feeders and drinkers. They use lots of water but don't like to have their roots sitting in water.

Sun - Minimum amount 6 hours.