



To ensure our roses give us the best performance and plentiful blooms for the following season, we must brave the cold and tidy up, mulch, spray and prune our somewhat scraggly and, by now, bare roses.

Planting

Choose the site carefully, to suit both you and the rose. Roses like sun for at least one-third of the day, and air movement although they dislike strong winds. Plant your roses where you will get the most enjoyment from them, next to a frequently used path or close to a window. Standards and weeping roses are excellent for adding height and dimension to the garden but remember to stake them well at planting, before the roots are covered, to prevent root damage.



Spraying

Spraying your roses and the ground around your roses is essential to keeping them healthy. When spraying roses we need to consider whether the roses are dormant or if they are in their growing season. If the roses are dormant or are heading into dormancy please see the brochure 'Winter Spraying'. If your roses have leaves and are actively growing then you need to take a different approach. Roses can get diseases or insects, therefore the best advice is to come in and see one of our friendly staff with a sample of your problem plant to ensure you use the correct product. When spraying, its best to do so early in the morning or later in the evening to stop the leaves from burning. Plants which have a dry root zone are also prone to leaf burn, so ensure your plants are well watered the night before. Most sprays need six hours drying time to be effective.

Fertiliser

Winter is the optimum time to throw some garden lime or dolomite lime around to keep your soil sweet, but do not apply any other fertilisers until mid-August, as the plants cannot use it while they are dormant and the fertiliser will only get washed away by winter rains. After August add half a cup of fertiliser to each rose and reapply at three monthly intervals (excluding winter).

Deep digging helps drainage and aeration and loosens the soil for easy root penetration. Mix in Oderings Compost to improve the condition of the soil and add a handful or two of Oderings 'Blood & Bone'. If you're replacing an old rose, it's well worth the effort to dig out the old soil too, replacing it with fresh new soil and compost to give the new rose a kick-start. Dig the hole large enough to create a mound in the bottom so that the roots can be spread over it, and ensure it is deep enough for the graft to sit just above the soil. Do not apply fertiliser at this stage as direct contact with fertiliser can kill tender new roots. Space your plants about a metre apart, slightly more for very vigorous varieties, and two metres apart for climbers. Remember to keep your rose well watered for the first six months as it becomes established.

Cut Flowers

To enjoy your rose as a cut flower, cut to a five-leaflet leaf always on an angle with clean sharp secateurs to encourage another bloom to follow. Try to pick your roses in the evening or first thing in the morning while they are still fresh. Do not cut the stems any longer than what is required as this deprives the plant of nutrients. After cutting each stem, hold each one under water while you re-cut a few millimetres from the base, this ensures that no air lock remains in the stem that prevents water uptake. Fill a bucket with water and place inside somewhere cool out of direct sunlight, then plunge each stem up to the top of the stem for a few hours to condition, or leave overnight if you prefer. When placing in a vase add a sachet of crystal flower nourishment and fill your vase close to the top with water to provide humidity. Change water on a regular basis and keep roses out of direct sunlight.





Pruning

Pruning roses is often thought to be difficult, but with know-how it isn't. Rose flowers are produced on new season's growth, so by cutting out dead, diseased wood and reducing the stems by about a half you will get strong new growth and lots of flowers produced in spring. The later you prune the faster the regrowth and sealing of the wounds. Make sure you always use sharp clean secateurs to prevent the spread of disease. As a guideline prune between one-third and half of the growth on bush roses and half of the growth for floribunda. Remove all spindly, weak or intertwining branches, especially those that rub up against one another or are too crowded. Always cut on an angle just above a bud that points in the direction you wish the stem to grow. You should aim for 3-5 healthy canes per plant. Standard roses are cut in the same manner as bush roses, cutting each stem to an outward growth to maintain a beautiful shape. Climbing roses are pruned quite differently; you can prune lightly in winter and give them their main pruning after flowering (spring/summer), removing old and dead canes and shortening what remains.


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Roses

