

Peter Beales®
World Leaders in Classic Roses

The Basics of Rose Care and Cultivation

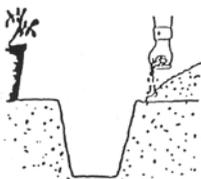


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Planting Roses

Planting Container Roses



- If possible ground should be prepared well in advance, dug deeply and dressed with well-rotted farmyard manure, compost or other organic material and bone meal. Never use fresh farmyard manure and never allow any sort of manure or fertiliser to come into direct contact with the roots when planting.

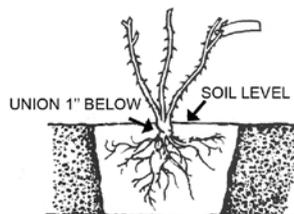
- Ensure the hole dug is wider and deeper than the container in which the rose is growing.
- Remove the plant carefully from its pot, so that the root system is not disturbed. If the rose has been recently containerised it is wise to leave it in its pot for a couple of months to allow the roots to establish.



- With the plant upright carefully replace the soil, firming gently with the feet, ensuring that the first inch or so of the branches are below soil level.
- Water well. Container roses planted in the summer will require regular watering.

Planting Container Roses in Pots

- Choose a large container with good drainage holes. As a rough guide, for smaller shrubs which grow up to 3ft, use pots with a 14 – 16 inch diameter. For larger ramblers and scramblers use pots with a depth of up to 20 – 22 inches.
- Add further drainage in the form of shingle, builders rubble or similar.
- Use a loam-based compost if possible, (such as John Innes No.3).
- As with planting roses into the ground the base of the stems should be just below the surface of the soil.
- Allow at least two inches between the top of the pot and the compost level, for ease of watering. Remember that pot grown roses will need regular watering during the summer.



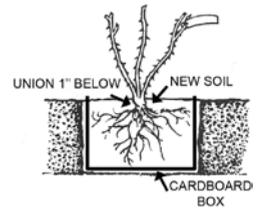
Care of Established Roses in Pots

- In spring each year it is advisable to remove the top two or three inches of compost and replace with fresh compost.
- Every three years replace all compost. This should be done when the rose is dormant during January and February. Remove the rose from the pot, gripping it near the base. Most of the compost will come out with the roots. Carefully knock away any loose compost and tease out the roots with your fingers before re-potting.
- Roses in tubs should be fed with high potash, liquid, fertiliser, every two weeks throughout the growing season and watered regularly.

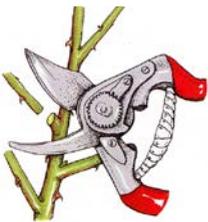
Specific Rose Replant Disorder

If you are replacing roses with new roses you must change the soil, sterilise it, or give it at least two complete seasons rest from roses before re-planting. This avoids the effects of 'roses replant disorder'. Alternatively, dig a hole large enough for a biodegradable cardboard box, no smaller than 1 cubic foot in size and fill with fresh soil. The box should be sunk into the ground

in the position where you wish to plant your new rose and filled with good virgin soil or compost. Plant your rose in the centre of the box at normal planting depth. Rose replant disease or rose sickness as it is sometimes known, is the result of Allelopathy, which is the effects of one plant on another. In this case it is thought to be the chemical secretion from one rose that is left in the soil, to which a new rose will object. Planting a new rose in another's shoes will result in a rose that is stunted and unwell, never producing abundant blooms and a flower that, by and large is smaller than it should be.



Dead heading



Unless a rose produces hips it will require dead-heading for a couple of reasons. Firstly a dead flower head is unsightly but, more importantly, the removal of the spent flowers on a repeat flowering plant will speed up the formation of the next flowers. You will notice that the stem supporting the flower will always die back when it's task is accomplished, by removing it the process is simply speeded up. A spent flower that was a solitary bloom should be cut away just above the next or lower leaf joint, from which point the next bloom will grow. The same applies to clusters of flowers. Although removing the flower individually is fine whilst waiting for others to finish but the whole cluster should be removed down to the next or lower leaf joint. Of course this is not such an easy task on a large climber, where one or two spent flowers may have to remain, until they eventually fall.

Summer Pruning of Once Flowering Roses

General Pruning Rules

There are some golden rules of pruning that apply to all roses.

- Always use good quality, sharp secateurs.
- Ensure that all cuts are made above a node, on an angle, away from the bud.
- Cuts should be clean.
- Remove dead, damaged and diseased wood.
- Remove wood, which has rubbed against other branches, and become damaged.
- Try to keep the centre of the plant open.

Pruning Once Flowering Shrub Roses

- In many cases it is not necessary to prune summer flowering shrub roses. They will make attractive plants without much attention.
- The only requirements may be to remove any dead, diseased or chaffed branches.
- Since they flower on wood produced in the previous season, if pruning is required, it is best carried out after flowering. This gives the plant time to build up more growth for next season's flowers but remember, if you prune the varieties which produce hips in the autumn, they will not produce hips if they are pruned.

Pruning Once Flowering Climbing and Rambling Roses

- Ramblers will often produce long, flexible branches from ground level. THESE ARE NOT SUCKERS and will produce next years flowers.
- Prune the older wood and leave as many young shoots as possible.
- Pruning should be done in summer immediately after flowering.
- Some Ramblers require only occasional pruning and are often better left to their own devices.

Removing Suckers

Most modern roses are propagated by budding, a form of grafting whereby material from the cultivar is placed under the bark of a root stock where the two eventually fuse and the cultivar begins to grow. Once this happens all evident parts of the root-stock, i.e. the branches, are cut away leaving the cultivar able to take over the roots of the host plant. Sometimes, especially if the roots are damaged, a shoot of the host plant will begin to grow. As soon as this is noticed it should be removed, as cleanly as possible from the plant. The host variety used is often stronger in



growth than the budded cultivar and if allowed to grow will often take over thus sapping the strength of the cultivar causing it to become weak and eventually die. The sucker should be traced to its place of origin and, by applying pressure with the thumb, should be pushed downwards until it comes away from the root. This is more difficult if the sucker has reached a stage of being mature when it may have to be removed by cutting. If the cut is not very precise and any of it is left, it will actually promote further branches of the sucker to grow. Hence it is important to catch them whilst still small.

Most standard roses are propagated in the same way but instead both the stem and the roots are the hosts and suckers can emerge from both. For this reason any shoots seen growing from the stem of the standard should also be removed, in the same manner by applying pressure with the thumb.

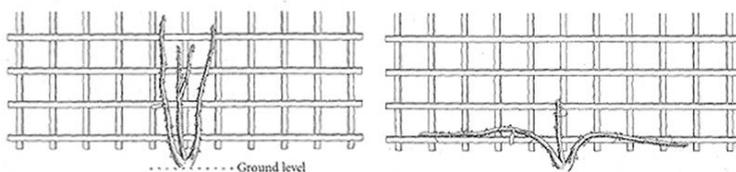
Training climbing and rambling roses

Roses do not cling to the wall themselves like some plants do. Therefore they will require tying in. On a wall it is a good idea to put up trellis or wires for this purpose. As the rose grows it should be encouraged to grow horizontally outward and upward. The lower stems straight out where possible and the taller ones, up and then outward. In this way new growth will be encouraged, as will more flowers.

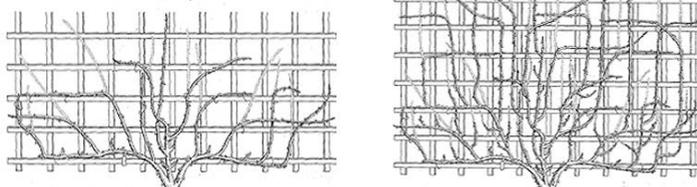
On a pillar it is best, where possible to train the branches around it for the same reason as above.

Ramblers for trees will need to be tied to the trunk to begin with until the branches meet those of the tree, thereafter, the tree will act as a natural support.

First year



Second and Third year



To prevent all the flowers appearing at the top of a trellis, arch and curve the stems as much as possible, rather than keeping them straight. This will encourage side lateral growth which will encourage flowering lower down the plant. Attach stems to the trellis using loosely tied green string.

Feeding Roses

Roses are very hungry plants and should therefore be fed regularly throughout their lives to ensure maximum blooms and growth, from first year plants through to 50 year old ramblers.

We recommend a good feed of a nitrogen high feed like “Top Rose” after the late-winter prune in February, then feeding every two weeks throughout the flowering period with a high potash feed like “Tomorite” tomato feed at half the recommended strength.

Pests and diseases that affect roses

As with all plants, roses can become infested with pests or damaged by disease. This should not however be a reason for not including them in the garden, as Peter used to say ‘what are a few black spots among friends?’

Good husbandry is really a matter of common sense, a little bit of logical thinking in relation to the choice of variety and its situation, its care coupled with preventative measures will go a long way in maintaining a healthy rose.

Pests

Pests can include a range of creatures that often feed off of the plant and can, if left untreated, cause serious damage to your roses.

These can include Aphids, Caterpillars, Leaf Rolling Sawfly, Rose Slug Sawfly, Red Spider Mite and Thrips.

Whilst traditional methods of control such as spraying with insecticides are often effective in controlling an outbreak of these pests, natural alternative forms of pest control are also available.

These are much kinder to the environment and can include introducing natural predators and parasites to your gardens.

Many of these beneficial predators can also be encouraged into your garden naturally by introducing bug boxes and by planting certain companion plants, such as marigolds.



Rabbits and Deer can also prove to be a serious problem for roses, nibbling on the fresh new growth in spring and devastating the plant by stripping its bark in the winter. The only real solution is to ensure that Rabbits and Deer are unable to enter your garden by erecting a fence. Alternatively, whilst not looking very attractive, putting individual wire fencing around each rose will do the job, if it is not possible to completely contain your garden with a perimeter fence.

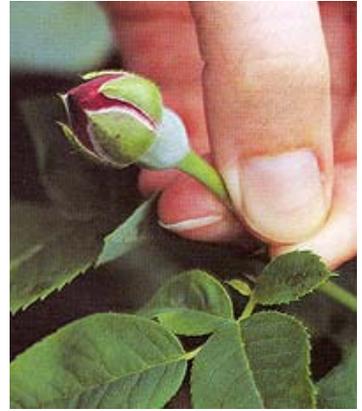


Diseases

Mildew

There are two forms of mildew 'downy' and 'powdery'. Downy mildew is more likely to occur on roses grown under glass and is far less common than powdery mildew. Extreme differences between day and night time temperatures can be contributory, as can poor ventilation. Unlike powdery mildew, downy mildew is more brown or blue in shade and will attack the mature leaves first.

Powdery mildew is the most prevalent in the garden and is more likely to occur in situations that are dry and airless. A grey to white coloured powder will appear initially on young leaves and succulent shoots, causing them to become distorted and therefore inhibiting the growing process. If it is not checked, it will then spread on to older leaves and stems and, eventually, on to flower buds where it will prevent them from opening, thus causing them to drop off. Because it is not often seen until after the first flush of flowers when the summer heat is more intense, a degree of prevention can be achieved from a regular spraying regime earlier on. Mildew is difficult to control organically, the only advice to offer is that a well-tended rose will be less susceptible than a neglected one. Once in place mildew is difficult to cure, although fungicides will prevent it from spreading. It is best to ensure that the affected leaves are removed and destroyed, as well as any infected wood.



Black Spot

Fallen leaves should be collected and burnt where possible, as the spores will over-winter in shallow soil where they will remain ready to begin their destruction the following year. In the worst scenario the spores will infect branches and unless tackled this is when the whole plant is at risk. Cut away what you can and apply a winter wash with a mild steriliser, there are now several available that will successfully deal with fungal diseases such as black spot. A regular wash with the hose is also recommended as this will wash the spores away from the plant on which it is harbouring. Some say that black spot can be deterred by spraying the plant with a solution of skimmed milk, but we have never tried doing so.

Rust



Rust enjoys warm and damp conditions and can totally destroy a rose if infestation is bad enough. Symptoms first appear in early summer in the form of small bright orange pustules on the undersides of leaves. They often go unnoticed until the disease spreads when they become larger, changing colour to brown and then to black. In a bad attack the spores will kill the leaves and eventually spread to the stems, which will start to die back. Control is almost impossible at this stage when the only real option is to dig up the plant and burn it. If it is caught early enough however, pick off and burn the infected leaves and keep an eye out for re-infection.

As in the case of black spot, rust spores will lie dormant on dead leaves or in the soil during the winter, so gather up any fallen leaves and wash the plant and surrounding soil with a fungicide whilst it is dormant. The following season ensure that a spraying regime is started early and repeated regularly.



Stem Canker

Canker is seldom seen on younger well-tended roses, occurring most frequently on mature plants with a high percentage of old wood. It manifests itself in the form of gnarled, swollen lesions, often with surrounding dead and furling bark. Canker will usually appear where there has been exposed tissue at sites of previous damage, such as at the union where the plant was originally budded. If the stem on which it appears is expendable simply remove it. Frequently however, the canker will appear in awkward places that are impossible to prune away. If the plant is important to the garden the only solution is to carefully cut away the damaged tissue. Use a sharp knife for this and keep on removing layers until only clean pith is left. Cover the scar with grafting wax to prevent other infections entering. If the rose is not important the easiest solution is to dig it up and burn it.

Viruses

Viruses are not contagious between roses in the garden and if present will have been there since the plant was propagated. Rose mosaic is the worst of the viruses manifesting itself as wavy yellow lines or white blotches on leaves, and although there are others, they are of less significance. Viruses are not life threatening and at worst will cause somewhat stunted growth and blooms.

Other rose ailments

Pests and diseases are not the only ailments to affect roses but by and large the majority of others are cosmetic and will do no real harm.

Proliferation

This is one of the weirdest phenomena of the rose. In early summer a bloom will appear to be opening quite normally, then it will be noticed that another bud is appearing from the centre of the unfurling flower. This is proliferation and no one knows exactly why it happens. Some experts believe it to be viral, and it does tend to occur repeatedly in the same varieties although not consistently on every plant in that variety, but the general consensus is that it is genetic, with parts of the reproductive area over producing.



Balling Flowers (sticking petals)



In wet summer weather the outer petals on a freshly opening flower often become fused together, the flower is then referred to as being 'balled'. This is most often found on the many petalled varieties with naturally tight buds, particularly some of the Bourbons and the Hybrid Teas. If full sun follows prolonged rain the petals that are congealed together then dry out to become a crisp shell which will prevent the flower opening. If this happens the bloom will rot within its cocoon and fall away or remain on the plant in a revolting brown state.

Sometimes with a bit of care, the outer petals can be gently teased away to allow the flower to open naturally.

Spray Damage

If regular spraying is a common practice in the garden, make sure that two sprayers are kept, with one used specifically for weed killers. If inadvertently used without thorough cleaning, traces of weed killer from the knapsack or pump up sprayer can be positively poisonous to roses. Likewise should a neighbour or farmer spray herbicide when it is windy it is possible for the spray to drift with the same outcome. Similarly, roses that are climbing up fences and structures that have been recently painted/creosoted seem to object to close proximity to the chemicals.



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