

Peter Beales®

World Leaders in Classic Roses

The Basics of Growing & Maintaining Clematis & Climbing Plants



The Basics of Growing & Maintaining Clematis & Climbing Plants

Clematis

- Pg. 3 Clematis Pruning Method by Group -
Pruning in the first year after planting
- Pg. 4-5 Clematis Pruning Method by Group -
Pruning after the first year of planting
- Pg. 5 Clematis in Containers
- Pg. 6 Pests and diseases
- Pg. 7 Cultural tips for special groups growing outdoors

Climbing Plants

- Pg. 8-9 Climbing Plant Pruning Methods by Group
- Pg. 9 Feeding
- Pg. 10 Pests and Diseases
- Pg. 10 Climbers in Containers

Clematis Pruning Method by Group

Pruning in the first year after planting



1st Year - Feb/Mar cut
back stems to 30cm

Group I (*Tidying*)

Hard prune immediately after first years flowers have finished.

Some varieties in this group include: 'Early Sensation'; Any of the 'alpina', 'cartmanii', 'macropetala' and 'montana' varieties: C. alpina 'Blue Dancer'; C. alpina 'Constance'; C. alpina 'Pamela Jackman'; C. alpina 'Ruby'; C. armandii; C. cirrhosa 'Balearica'; C. cirrhosa 'Freckles'; C. macropetala 'Markhams Pink'; C. montana 'Freda'.

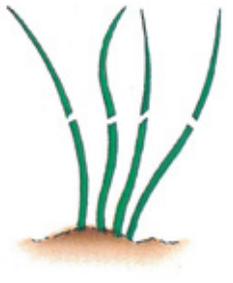


1st Year - Feb/Mar cut
back stems to 30cm

Group II (*Light pruning*)

Hard prune end February/Early March in first year of planting.

Some varieties in this group include: 'Artic Queen'; 'Asao'; 'Barbara Jackman'; 'Bees Jubilee'; 'Candy Stripe'; 'Claire de Lune'; 'Congratulations'; 'Crystal Fountain'; 'Dennys Double'; 'Diana's Delight'; 'Dr Ruppel'; 'Elsa Spath'; 'Empress'; 'Fireworks'; 'Gillian Blades'; 'Hanaguruma'; 'Jackmanii Alba'; 'Rebecca'; 'Royalty'; 'Thyrislund'.



1st Year - Feb/Mar cut
back stems to 30cm

Group III (*Hard pruning*)

Hard prune end February/Early March.

Hard pruning involves cutting all stems to just above a good pair of buds (at base of leaf joints) approx. 6-9"(15-23cm) from ground. Clematis should be pruned, according to group, after this first hard prune.

Some varieties in this group include: 'Alba Luxurians'; 'Alita'; 'Angelique'; 'Arabella'; 'Barbara Harrington'; 'Carnaby'; 'Cassis'; 'Cezanne'; 'Chantilly'; 'Comtesse de Bouchard'; 'Countess of Wessex'; 'Esme'; 'Happy Birthday'; 'Jackmanii Superba'; 'Monte Casino'; 'Pink Dwarf'; 'Viennetta', C. florida 'Alba Plena'; C. heracleifolia Cassandra.

Clematis Pruning Method by Group

Pruning after the first year of planting



2nd Year - Feb/Mar cut back stems to 1m. During subsequent years cut out dead or weak stems after flowering.

Group I

Tidy After Flowering eg. *C. armandii*, *atragenes*, *cirrhusa*, *montanas*, etc.

Prune any unwanted/untidy growth immediately after flowering. This is to keep vigorous growth in check and within the confines of the space provided.

Harder pruning will help prevent stems becoming too woody and growth getting out of control. However, flowering may be delayed for one season.

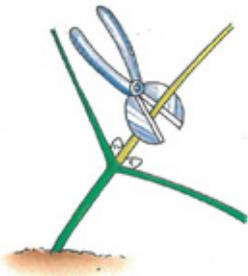


2nd Year - Feb/Mar cut back stems to 1m.

Group II

Light Prune eg. Early Summer Large Flowering Clematis

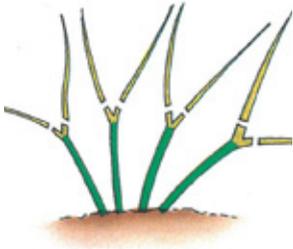
Remove the top third to half of the plant by pruning all stems just above a good pair of healthy buds, during February/March. Any weak, dead or damaged stems can also be removed. If possible prune one or two stems near to ground level to encourage new growth low down. For older plants and rejuvenation, prune out top half of stems during late autumn, then hard prune all stems as per Group III.



3rd Year - Feb/Mar and subsequent years, cut back all stems to a pair of buds.

Clematis Pruning Method by Group

Pruning after the first year of planting (continued)



2nd Year - Feb and subsequent years, reduced all stems to just above base of the previous season's growth, within 75cm of soil level.

Group III

Hard Prune eg. *Viticella*, *texasensis*, herbaceous cultivars, species, etc.

During February/March, prune all stems just above a pair of healthy buds about 6"- 8" (13 – 45cms) above the ground. Plants could be "tidied" by removing the upper half or two thirds of stems during late autumn. Herbaceous "heraclefolias" should be hard pruned around April time. Some herbaceous types can have completely dead stems cut to ground level during late winter – take care not to damage any emerging new growth.

Clematis in Containers

Containers should be as large as possible, at least 18" (45cm) diameter and depth. Terracotta ones are best but, try to avoid plastic. Ensure good drainage holes and use plenty of crocks, large stones or gravel at the bottom. Raise container off the ground using pot feet or blocks.

Compost should be soil based; ideally 75% volume John Innes No.3 plus 25% volume multi-purpose. Evenly mix 2 to 3 good handfuls of blood, fish and bone meal to the compost and plant clematis at the correct depth. Water well and regularly throughout growing season. Do Not keep compost too wet over winter and always check drainage. Feed with Tomorite regularly from late spring to autumn.

When pruning remove 2 or 3 inches of compost from top and top-dress with fresh compost plus a handful of bone meal, then water in. Every four or five years remove rootball completely during late winter. Cut off 3" (7cm) of rootball all around the outside. Cut one third of rootball from bottom then re-pot using fresh compost mix.

Pests and Diseases

Pests

The main pest is aphids, and at times red spider mites. Control can be had by using an insecticide spray – try to use different active ingredients to help prevent build-up of resistance. Slug and snail control is very important as they can produce effects similar to clematis wilt. Check for stripping of bark on stem bases. New growth just below the soil surface can be particularly vulnerable. Use your preferred control method ie. Slug pellets, liquid or organic products. More recently, all these pests can be controlled biologically with nematodes or other natural predators. Container grown plants may harbour vine weevil or cockchafer grubs.



Vine weevil grub and beetle



Cockchafer grub and beetle

Diseases

A powdery white covering to the leaves mid-season could indicate powdery mildew infection. Control by fungicides of your choice. This is particularly important for those cultivars prone to clematis wilt.



Clematis Wilt: This is evident by a sudden “wilt” of young growth downwards. If no other cause is seen, cut down affected stems to first leaf joints above ground. Drench soil around stems with fungicide twice, 1-2 weeks apart. Not all cultivars are prone to wilt – especially species or viticella groups. Slug or snail damage can give similar symptoms.

Cultural tips for special groups growing outdoors

All the clematis listed below would do better grown in pots. Please refer to section “Clematis in Containers” for these cultivars.

Grow outside from late spring to early autumn, then under cover in an unheated glasshouse or conservatory. Remember to harden off before placing outside in the new year.

i) Atragene, Heracleifolia, Recta, Tangutica groups and flammula, rehderiana and other species

These prefer poor, well drained, open soils. Atrogenes do not require deep planting. Prune herbaceous heracleifolias hard in April. Old growth gives winter protection.

ii) Evergreen clematis ie. Armandii, cirrhosa, kweichowensis, napaulensis, Winter Beauty, etc

Grow in sheltered places preferably away from cold winds in well drained soil. Walls and fences offer good conditions. Evergreen clematis may look “tired” during summer due to their resting period. Don’t forget to feed and water.

iii) Evergreen New Zealand group

Unless growing in mild, sheltered climates, these clematis are best grown in pots in a cold greenhouse or conservatory. Make sure compost is particularly free draining.

iv) Florida group

Grow against a south or south-west facing wall or fence in very free draining soil. Frost protection is very beneficial. Remove this in February or March to prune. Feed with bone meal and replace protection until weather warms up.

The Basics of Growing & Maintaining Climbing Plants

Climbing Plant Pruning Methods by Group

Pruning

Almost all established climbers need routine pruning and training to help promote vigorous, healthy growth and to build a strong framework on which to develop. To help method and degree of pruning, it is useful to identify new and old wood. How much wood/stems to take out depends on age of climber, vigour and variety.

Group I (Tidy prune)

Actinidia, Akebia, Billardiera, Hedera, Holboellia, Hydrangea, Lonicera, Parthenocissus, Passiflora, Pileostegia, Schizophragma, Sollya, Trachelospermum, Vitis.

Take action mainly late winter/early spring. This is to remove dead wood and old flowering stems. Some, like Akebia, would be tidied after flowering. A slightly harder action is needed if training on certain structures, such as pergolas. Very hard pruning or complete removal of growth may be needed in winter for knotted growth or very old, unproductive stems, such as Hydrangea or Lonicera.

Group II (*Light pruning*)

Campsis, Gelsemium, Schisandra, Solanum.

In late winter or spring trim laterals fairly hard or last seasons flowering wood, to create flowering spurs. Remove some very old or dead wood.

Group III (Hard pruning)

Jasminum, Lathyrus, Polygonum (Fallopia).

Jasmines build up a lot of growth that can develop into a congested 'thatch'. Prune this out and reduce growth by one half in late winter/early spring. Remove totally old and dead wood. Lathyrus growth dies down at the end of the year and is removed completely allowing new growth to develop. Polygonums need all old growth pruned hard late winter or early spring.

Group IV (Wisteria)

Treated specifically in its own group, Wisterias need two prunings per year. The first one in mid season to shorten all laterals by one half and tidy extension growth. Second one in mid-winter to cut back all laterals, previously shortened, to two or three buds thus creating flowering spurs. Also remove completely very old unproductive wood. If necessary reduce total mass and extension growth.

Feeding

All climbers benefit from a feed such as bone meal, fish blood and bone meal or Toprose in early spring. Apply according to instructions, lightly work into the soil surface and water in.

Feed with a high potash formula such as Tomorite throughout growing season. Keep watered particularly in dry conditions, on light or sandy soils, and where planted against walls or under trees.

Pests and Diseases

If watered and fed well, problems will be greatly reduced. Watch for powdery mildew, aphids, caterpillars or dieback. Spray with proprietary fungicide or insecticide.

Climbers in Containers

Although not considered the best way to grow climbers, if needed compost and method is much the same as for clematis. Some climbers are tender and make good subjects for the cool greenhouse or conservatory. Particular attention must be paid to watering, feeding, as well as pest and disease control.

Try this method for Lathyrus, Passiflora or Trachelospermum.





Peter Beales[®]

London Road Attleborough Norfolk England NR17 1AY
info@peterbealesroses.com www.classicroses.co.uk
Tel: 01953 454707 Fax: 01953 456845

Updated 20180202