

ROSES

Growing good roses is not difficult, provided you meet a few basic requirements including good food, water, air circulation, sunlight and soil.

Very few soils are naturally good for growing roses and it therefore necessary to transform the bed into a rose's preferred environment. Compost, manure and other rotten organic matter will improve almost any soil type. It is, of course, essential that that the soil is well drained. Very light or sandy soils can always be replaced with a pre-packed soil for roses and shrubs.

Position roses in an open and sunny spot that has sufficient air movement but is protected from hot summer winds. Make sure there are no competitors such as larger or vigorous trees and shrubs in the rose area.

When planting, it is important to leave space between the roses. This differs depending on the type of rose as well as on the vigour of the variety. If in doubt, follow this basic guideline.

- Hybrid Tea, Floribunda and English roses: 75cm - 1,25m apart
- Climber and Ramblers: 2m - 3m apart
- Miniatures: 30cm - 50cm apart
- Old Fashioned: 1,5m - 5m apart

Ten Points to Remember

1. Do not disturb the soil around rose bushes during the growing season.
2. Always dispose of cuttings - don't leave them lying around on the ground.
3. Occasionally inspect the ties of your standard rose trees and loosen them if necessary.
4. Remove all old rose flowers continually throughout the year.
5. Always dig square holes.
6. Never re-plant a new rose in the same soil as an old one.
7. Read and comply with the instructions for sprays, feeds, etc.
8. Don't use the same spray continuously - alternate them.
9. Do this year what you didn't do last year.
10. If in any doubt, consult a knowledgeable horticulturist at Starke Ayres Garden Centre.

Rose Pruning

The first rule of pruning roses is not to be intimidated by the thought of pruning! Most mistakes will grow out and it is better for the plant to be pruned than to leave it to grow on uncontrolled.

Pruning is usually done in mid-July to encourage new growth, remove dead or diseased wood, to improve air and light movement in the centre of the plant and to improve the shape of the plant. You will use a good pair of sharp secateurs and long-handled loppers for the thick branches.

- Prune to open up the centre of the plant. The cut should be a clean one, at a 45° angle, above a bud that is facing outward
- Remove damaged or diseased branches as well as weak and spindly twigs
- Remove suckers that have grown below the graft union
- Seal with Steriseal and spray the plant and the surrounding soil with lime sulphur
- Most Hybrid tea and Floribunda roses are pruned like this so the blooms will develop on new wood. Exceptions to this are:
 - Ramblers and Climbers which are pruned to remove damage and dead wood and to shape the plant and keep the size manageable. Ramblers can be pruned straight after flowering if required.
 - Modern Shrub roses need one third of the older branches to be removed
 - Miniature roses which just need to be shaped.

Roses and Companion Planting

The correct companion plants assist the growth and health of the host plant.

- To help control aphids plant the following amongst your roses:
Chives, garlic, tansy, nasturtiums, basil, coriander, elderberry, feverfew, pyrethrum, nettles, larkspurs, parsley, southernwood and wormwood.
- To help control mildew plant the following amongst your roses:
Chives, elder, garlic and nettles.
- To help control red spider mite plant the following amongst your roses:
Rhubarb, feverfew, pyrethrum, lemon grass, wormwood and coriander.
- To help against rust plant the following amongst your roses:
Chamomile and pyrethrum.
- Other good companion plants to grow amongst your roses are the following:
Purslane, mignonette, marigolds, catnip, catmint, lavender, santolina, rue, golden rod, yarrow and thyme.

Aftercare:

What to do throughout the year

Mid-January

Feed each rose with a 3:1:5 plant food and water-in well. Check your plants for signs of rust fungus and continue with your spray continuously.

End January

Give your roses their summer pruning. Carefully fork into the soil the old mulch and replace it with a thick layer of new mushroom compost.

Mid-February

Feed each rose with 3:2:1 and water-in well. Continue spraying.

Mid-April

Feed each rose with 2:3:2 plant food and water-in well.

May

Less watering should be needed now. Purchase new lime sulphur to be ready to begin spraying next month.

Late June

Spray with lime sulphur before pruning.

July

Begin your main winter pruning. Immediately afterwards spray the roses as well as the soil around them with Lime Sulphur. Spray again in another 10-14 days. Fork the soil over lightly but be careful not to dig too close to the plants. Spread manure around each base and water well if the weather has been dry.

Early August

Feed each rose with 2:3:2 plant food and water well.

Early September

Feed each rose with 3:1:5 plant food and water well. Keep a look out for aphids (greenfly / blackfly) and rust (bright orange fungus on the underside of leaves). Use Kombat Aphids and Kombat Rust respectively but do not apply together.

Late September

Apply a decent layer of mushroom compost over the entire bed and good mulch such as bark nuggets around the base of each plant. Begin deep watering – twice a week at first and then according to weather conditions. Remove old flowers continuously.

Mid-October

Give each rose 3:2:1 and water-in well. Begin to spray your roses every 10 to 14 days.

Mid-November

Feed each rose with 3:1:5 plant food and water-in well. Continue to spray regularly.

Mid- to End December

Start watering your roses overhead, they will appreciate a cooling shower and it is helpful in keeping red spider mites away/ feed each rose with 3:2:1 and water-in well. Continue spraying.