

## ROSE CULTURE

Over 150 species of the genus *Rosa* have been identified throughout the Northern Hemisphere. These have been hybridized to create more than 1000 varieties. Therefore, a classification system has been devised to differentiate among these roses. They are divided into three broad types: species or shrub roses, old garden roses, and modern roses.

### CLASSIFICATION OF ROSE TYPES

For the Inland Empire it is best to choose roses that will do well in Zones 4-5.

- ◆ **Hybrid Tea** – A popular class of rose. Large blooms are produced, usually one to a stem. Plant size ranges from two feet to six feet depending on variety. There are many varieties.
- ◆ **Grandiflora** – Hybrid tea-type flowers born singly or in long-stemmed clusters. This variety is sometimes classed as a hybrid tea.
- ◆ **Floribunda** – Noted for producing large quantities of flowers in clusters on vigorous and bushy plants. Flowers are usually smaller than teas. Good plants for border or massing.
- ◆ **Polyanthas** – Flowers less than two inches wide are carried in large sprays. Similar to floribundas.
- ◆ **Miniature** – Range in size from 6 inches to 24 inches. These roses are grown on their own roots. Since they have shallow roots, they require regular water, fertilizer, and mulch. Often used as border plants and in rock gardens.
- ◆ **Old Garden Roses** – A huge family of roses. Some families you might encounter are:
  - Albas and hybrid albas
  - Bourbons
  - Centifolias
  - Rugosa and hybrids
  - Damasks
  - Gallicas
  - Hybrid Perpetual
  - Moss Roses PortlandSome of these roses re-bloom, and some do not. Check catalogs and books before purchasing.
- ◆ **Shrub Rose** – This is a group of roses that have been developed and improved recently. Many are grown on their own roots. Some examples are:
  - Griffith Buck Roses
  - David Austin English Roses
- ◆ **Ground Cover Roses**
- ◆ **Climbing Roses** – Long, vigorous canes that must be tied for support.

## **SITE SELECTION**

A minimum of 6 hours of sun is necessary, preferably in the morning. Soil should be well drained, slightly acidic (6.0 - 6.5), with a high humus content. Good air circulation discourages diseases, but avoid very windy sites. Do not plant near trees or shrubs whose roots will compete for water or nutrients. However, you may under plant roses with shallow-rooted annuals such as alyssum or lobelia. Allow enough space between roses to weed and prune.

## **PLANTING**

Soak bare root plants overnight, but not more than 24 hours. Dig a hole 12-18 inches deep and wide enough that roots can spread out naturally. Trim off broken or damaged roots. Mound soil in center of hole to support roots, keeping the graft or bud union (knobby area on stem) 2-4 inches below ground level to provide winter protection. If roots are very long, prune to fit the planting hole.

For potted roses, set the intact root ball into the planting hole, just loosening the sides of ball if roots are showing. Miniature roses have no graft, so set them slightly deeper than they originally grew. Fill hole halfway with soil, then fill remaining space with water and allow to drain. Check level of bud union and correct if necessary. Fill in remainder of hole and firm gently by hand. Mound 8-10 inches of soil, or mulch loosely, over canes to prevent drying out until new growth emerges. When leaf buds begin to swell, gradually lower mound to ground level. Don't fertilize until after the first bloom cycle. Loosen or remove metal wire holding nametag to prevent cane injury.

Own-Root Roses: There are many advantages to growing own root roses - there is no suckering, they live longer, and are truer to form. They will start smaller, but by the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year, will equal/often surpass budded roses. Plant these roses the same way you plant the miniature roses.

## **FERTILIZER**

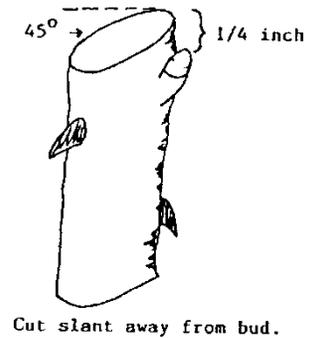
Many fertilizers are available. Choose one that includes trace elements as well as nitrogen, phosphate and potash. Follow label directions. What may work with one type of soil might not be right for roses in a different site. Roses are heavy feeders, but they require a fertilizer with a lower nutrient value consistently throughout the early growing season, rather than a heavy feeding. Examples are:

Apply mid-April to May. There are many choices of fertilizer, including:

- a. Apply 1-cup super phosphate per rose bush every other year (dig into the soil in 4 spots).
  - b. Apply 1-cup alfalfa meal, or 2 cups alfalfa pellets per bush (scratch into the soil).
  - c. As the soil warms in May, apply ½ cup 16-16-16 granular fertilizer per bush, or 1 cup per climbing rose (scratch into the soil, avoiding direct contact with cane).
  - d. Apply ½ cup Epson salts per bush (scratch into the soil).
  - e. Combination fertilizers and insecticides. Follow label directions carefully. Overdoing these materials can result in plant damage.
- General rose granular fertilizer. Formulations include 10-5-5, 8-12-4 or 6-10-4.
  - Apply fertilizers at early bud break every 6 weeks thereafter until, at the latest, July 30<sup>th</sup>. A late summer application will encourage tender growth that will not harden off before freezing weather.
  - Fertilize miniature roses at ½ strength. Roses with only one flush of bloom, such as some climbers and some bush roses, can be fertilized at bud break and after the blooms are finished.

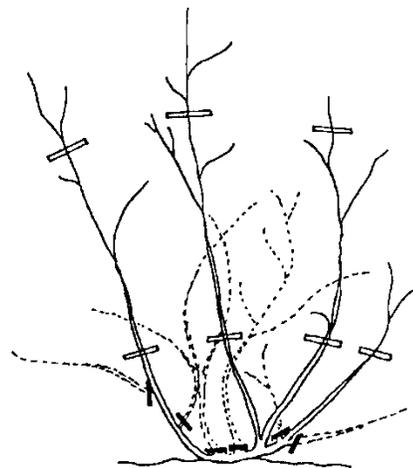
### SPRING CARE

- Gradually remove protective mulch and soil mounds as soon as daytime temperatures remain above 20°F.
- Prune away all but 3 to 6 canes on hybrid teas - fewer canes will result in fewer but larger blooms. Vigorous bushes will benefit from thinning, which provides good air circulation and helps prevent fungal disease.
- Remove all dead, diseased and damaged wood.
- Remove spindly canes, crossing branches and blind shoots (no terminal flower bud, just leaves).
- Cut all canes back to clear white wood.
- Prune to an outward pointing bud unless the bush tends to sprawl.



### SUMMER CARE

- Water **deeply** once or twice a week. Check soil 24 hours after watering – it should be moist 12-18 inches deep. If you water overhead, do so in the morning, so the foliage is dry before sunset.
- Apply 2-4 inches of mulch, using compact leaf mold, dried grass, or commercial compost to help retain moisture and discourage weeds. Leave space around the base of the plant.



Leaving the stem 10–12 inches tall produces more blooms but the shorter cuts produce larger flowers for hybrid teas. Floribundas, old garden roses and shrub roses require little pruning.

Remove excess canes and shorten to 4-6 inches after spring thaw

### SUMMER PRUNING

- Deadhead regularly (remove spent flowers). This allows the plant to produce more flowers rather than set seed.
- Remove growth that is growing toward the center of plant to allow better air circulation.
- Remove weak or twiggy growth and any dead or drying stems.
- Remove sucker growth coming from below grafted bud.
- Prune as necessary to shape bush.
- Weed as shallowly as possible to avoid damaging roots.

### **FALL CARE**

- Stop deadheading by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Continue watering. The roses should go into the winter thoroughly hydrated to help survive the freezing weather.
- Watch for spider mites and mildew. Give adequate control, if they appear.

### **WINTER CARE**

- Rake off and destroy all fallen leaves to prevent overwintering of diseases and insects.
- Mound 8-10 inches of soil around bush for winter protection. Bring this soil from another area far enough from roses so their feeder roots are not disturbed.
- While roses grown on their own roots do not have a graft that needs the heavy mulching for protection from harsh winters as do other types of roses, some mulching can be beneficial.
- If you strip the foliage, be careful not to leave open wounds, and do not do so until the plant is dormant.
- If you are using a wire mesh or newspaper collar, fill the remainder of the space with leaves, straw or pine needles in late November after the surface of the ground is frozen.
- Hardy Rugosa varieties and miniature roses do not usually need winter protection.
- Potted plants and tree roses should be moved to a cold but frost-free building during dormancy. Inspect these plants weekly for insect and disease problems.

### **PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL**

- Plant roses with known disease resistance.
- Observe regularly to identify problem before they become severe.
- Common insects are thrips, spider mites, aphids, and leaf cutter bees. Strong sprays of water can often eliminate these insects. If this doesn't control them, apply an appropriate insecticide.
- Common diseases are mildew and blackspot. Identify early. Give adequate treatment if they appear.

### **REFERENCES**

*Roses for the Inland Northwest*- available at the Spokane County Extension Office.  
Call (509) 477-2048 for information.

*All About Roses*            Ortho books

*Sunset Roses*            Lane Publishing Company