



ROSE CULTURE

Over 300 species of the genus *Rosa* have been identified throughout the northern hemisphere. These have been hybridized to create several thousand varieties. A classification system has been devised to differentiate among these roses, dividing them into three broad types: species or shrub roses, old garden roses, and modern roses.

CATEGORIES OF ROSES

While there are many varieties of roses, most rose specialists would divide them into three categories: Wild Roses, Old Garden Roses and Modern Roses. For the Inland Northwest, it is best to choose roses that will do well in Zones 4-5.

Wild Roses

Considered the wildflower type of rose, Wild Roses, or “species roses,” typically have a single bloom with a five-petal flower. Wild roses are almost always pink. It is rare to find them in any other color.

Old Garden Roses

The class called Old Garden Roses generally fall into two subclasses; Antique and Old Roses. Old Roses are those found in Europe before the very late 1700s and Antique Roses are those who can trace part of their ancestry back to *R. Chinensis* (The China Rose). Old Garden Roses bloom once per year, some of the hybrids re-bloom. Since they have evolved over time, Old Garden Roses have grown with the advantage of being extra hardy and disease-resistant.

Old Roses

- Gallica
- Damask
- Centifolia
- Moss
- Portland (or Damask Perpetuals)
- Alba
- Rambler

Antique Roses

- Bourbon
- Hybrid Perpetual
- Noisette
- China
- Tea

Modern Roses

Modern Roses were bred after 1867, taking the place of Old Garden Roses. Modern Roses offer a continuous bloom, as well as a larger bloom size. A disadvantage to these Modern Roses is that they typically lack a full-bodied aromatic fragrance and are less hardy and disease-resistant.

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e-mail your garden questions to: mastergardener@spokanecounty.org

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Specific Rose Varieties

Within these three main categories are a countless variety of roses. Some of the more common ones you can find, along with their benefits and unique blooming features are:

Hybrid Tea - are one of the most popular classes of roses. Large bountiful, ornate blooms are produced, usually one to a stem. Plant size ranges from 2 to 6 feet, depending on which of many varieties.

Grandiflora - Regarded as a subgroup class of hybrid tea roses with flowers born singly or in long-stemmed clusters.

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 - Similar to floribunda roses, the polyantha rose plant is shorter with smaller blooms. Flowers less than two inches wide are carried in large sprays.

Miniature - Range in size from 6 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.

Ground Cover Roses - also known as “landscape” roses. Groundcover roses are perfectly suited as a space filler, allowing them to sprawl outward as they reach no higher than three feet. Groundcover roses are both disease- and pest-resistant and offer continuous flowering.

Climbing Roses - not a class, but more of a description. Also referred to as “rambling” roses, they have sturdy and upright (sometimes arching) canes, which can be trained when provided support. However, these canes can grow up to 15 feet, which reach great heights along a trellis wall, garden fences and arbors and pergolas.

SITE SELECTION

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

PLANTING

WSU Publication, [Growing Roses in Washington State: Planting Roses](#), contains information about proper site selection, soil preparation, plant choice, and planting which are important parts of your success in growing roses.

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

Potted roses: Set the intact root ball into the planting hole, just loosening the sides of the ball, if roots are showing. Miniature roses have no graft, so set them slightly deeper than they originally grew. Fill the hole halfway with soil, then fill remaining space with water and allow to drain. Check the level of the bud union and correct it, if necessary. Fill in the remainder of the hole and firm gently by hand. Mound 8 to 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 a 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 2nd and 3rd year, will equal or often surpass budded roses. Plant these roses the same way you plant miniature roses.

ROSE CARE

WSU Publication, [Growing Roses in Washington - Rose Care Calendar](#), outlines the regular care and maintenance which is needed to keep your roses healthy and attractive throughout the growing season.

PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL

Inspect your roses frequently to watch for signs of disease or insect problems. Many problems are easier to management, if you catch them early.

WSU Publication, [Growing Roses in Washington State: Common Disease and Insect Problems](#), discusses the most common disease and insect problems that occur on roses in Washington.

WSU Reference Website, [Hortsense](#), also contains information on rose pest and disease control.

REFERENCES

Publication, [Roses for the Inland Northwest](#)- available at the Spokane County Extension Office. Call (509) 477-2181 for information.

American Rose Society: <https://www.rose.org/single-post/fun-rose-facts>

The Spokane Rose Society: <https://spokanerosesociety.com/>