

Recommended Roses

Some examples of recommended roses for the Capital Region include: (HT) Veterans Honor, Mister Lincoln, Moonstone, Gemini, Elina, Double Delight & Let Freedom Ring; (Gr) Queen Elizabeth, Melodie Parfumée & Wild Blue Yonder; (F) Sexy Rexy, Dicky, Play Girl, Sheila's Perfume, Sunsprite & Iceberg; (Cl) Dublin Bay, Don Juan, Iceberg & America; (Min) Fairhope, Kristen & Miss Flippins; (MinFl) Butter Cream, Conundrum & Foolish Pleasure; (S) Heritage, Graham Thomas, Gertrude Jekyll & Bonica; (OGR) Lamarque, Paul Neyron, Rose de Rescht, Baronne Prévoste, Marchesa Boccella & Louise Oldier. See the companion brochures for additional recommendations.

Planting

Pick a site that has at least 6 hours of sun, preferably morning sun, well away from trees and large shrubs to avoid interfering roots. Check how well the soil drains by digging a hole about 18 inches deep. Fill the hole with water and let it drain. Do this twice. The second time measure how long it takes the water level to lower 6 inches. Two hours or less is good. Raised beds are sometimes used to correct drainage problems.

Prepare your bed or planting area in advance by amending the existing clay soil with organic material such as compost, Leafgro, peat moss, Pro-Mix or whatever you can get easily. A good formula is about 3 parts original clay soil, 1 part Leafgro, 1 part Pro-Mix and 1 part Perlite. Additionally, for each bush in the bed, add 1.5 cups dolomitic lime (for magnesium and to raise pH to 6.5), 3 cups green sand (potash & minors), 1 cup bone meal (phosphorus), 4 cups humates (soil conditioner & iron), 3 cups of gypsum (calcium), and 1/2 cup triple superphosphate (phosphorus). [If your clay soil already has a pH of 6.5, eliminate lime, increase gypsum to 5 cups and add 2 cups of Epsom salts.] Dig or roto-till this mixture and let it fallow over winter. This will simplify spring planting. If planting a single bush dig a hole at least 24" in diameter and 20" deep, and amend as above.

Rose bushes are usually sold either as bare root or potted. In either case purchase first quality (#1 grade) bushes from reputable nurseries. When planting potted plants dig a hole in the previously prepared area just deep enough to position the bud union even with or below the soil surface. Scratch 2 tablespoons of triple superphosphate into the bottom of the hole. Place the root ball with pot in the hole, split the pot and remove,

being careful not to separate the roots from the soil. Thoroughly, mix 1 or 2 cups of alfalfa meal into the original soil excavated from the hole and backfill around the plant up to the surface level, watering as you go. Form a shallow basin around the bush to retain water. Water again. Cover the exposed bush with a box, large pot or equivalent to shade the canes from the sun for about 2 weeks until established.

Bare root rose bushes are normally shipped in the spring in time to be planted. These should be unpacked and planted as soon as possible. Start by dipping the roots and then the canes for 30 seconds each in a 10% bleach solution (about 1 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water) to kill any bacteria causing gall. Let dry for a few minutes, then soak the roots in a clean trash can filled with water for at least several hours or preferably overnight. As an option add 3 or 4, 325 mg aspirin (to stimulate the plants immune system to bacteria, fungi and viruses) and 2 tsp SUPERthrive (a growth stimulant) to each 5 gallons of water. Dig a hole in the previously prepared area deep enough to accommodate the roots, scratch in triple superphosphate as was done for potted roses and construct a cone in the hole using dampened excavated soil. When planting, place the roots over the prepared cone so that the bud union is close to or below the soil surface. Backfill as previously described for potted roses, and water generously to settle the backfill around the roots. Gently adjust the bud union until positioned properly, water again and shade the newly planted bush to protect from the sun as above.

Another alternative, is to temporarily plant bare root plants in pots so they can be moved inside in case of a late frost, and planted after any danger of frost.

Pruning

Pruning is necessary to maintain the health of rose bushes and promote vigorous flowering. Use sharp, clean pruning shears of the scissors type. Spring pruning begins about the time new growth buds begin to swell (about the time forsythia is in bloom). First remove all dead, damaged or diseased canes leaving at least 3 to 4 healthy canes. Next remove all twiggy growth (diameter smaller than a pencil). Finally cut back the remaining healthy canes by about one-third. Pruning cuts on the healthy canes are made below any diseased wood and about 1/4 inch above a live bud eye (the starting point of new flower stems). The cut should reveal a healthy cane (creamy white pith

center). Floribundas should be more lightly pruned, and miniatures more heavily pruned.

Spraying

Although many disease resistant rose varieties are being introduced every year, most roses will benefit from a preventative spray program. The most effective program to prevent fungus (black spot, powdery mildew, etc.) combines a **systemic fungicide** (e.g., *Honor Guard* or *Infuse*) with a **contact fungicide** (e.g., *Mancozeb*, *Manzate*, *Dithane*, or *Pentathlon*) in the same spray solution. This combination will reduce the possibility of developing resistant strains of fungi and should be applied every 14 days. Sucking and chewing insects can be controlled by *Merit* or any insecticide for roses. Mites are best controlled with the miticide, *Avid*, although a forced stream of water to the undersides of foliage 3 times in 9 days is usually effective. *Bayer Advanced 3 in 1 Insect, Disease and Mite Control* is effective against all of the above, and is most effective when mixed with one of the contact fungicides. Do not spray in the heat of the day, wear protective clothing, water deeply before spraying, and always dilute chemicals according to the label.

Fertilizing

Roses, like other flowers will perform better with a sensible fertilizer program. Two simple suggestions are: **Alt.#1** - After spring pruning apply 1 1/2 cups of Osmocote 18-5-12 (8 or 9 month duration) around the drip line of each bush, or; **Alt.#2** - Mid-April scratch in 2 to 3 cups of Espoma Plant-tone, Fertrell Rose Food or Mills Magic Mix around the drip line of each bush, repeat mid-June and mid-August. All amounts are for an average size bush; double the amounts for climbers and large shrubs and one half for minis and minifloras. Fertilize newly planted rose bushes sparingly until after the first bloom cycle. Always water well before and after feeding.

Watering

Roses require at least 1 inch of water every week during the growing season and 2 inches during the hot summer months. For a normal sized bush, 2 inches is about 9 gallons, applied as 4 to 5 gallons twice a week. Potted roses will benefit from watering every day in hot weather and every two days otherwise.

Growing roses takes a little effort, but no other flower pays you back with such incredible beauty over such a long growing season.

ROSES ROSES ROSES

Gertrude Stein's refrain "A Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose" expresses the uniqueness the rose has in our lives. Books, poems, and gardens have been dedicated to them, artists depict them, perfumers mimic them, and lovers embrace them. Since 1986 the rose has been our National Floral Emblem. They adorn our homes with the same panoply of colors and richness of fragrances. Yet the exalted position of the rose in our lives is probably exceeded only by the paucity of occurrence in our gardens. Why?

Although no other flower has such a long bloom season (May through November), the rose has been unfairly tainted with a reputation of being difficult to grow. There is no secret formula needed to grow beautiful roses in the Washington, D.C. area. Like any other plant, they require only proper planting, pruning, fertilizing and control of certain pests. Just follow the simple steps described below and you can grow beautiful roses in literally only a few minutes a week.

Selecting Roses

First decide how the roses are to be used in the garden. As a boundary? Along a wall? Over an arbor? On a trellis? Specimen? Cut flowers? Exhibitions? Is spraying for disease acceptable? Fragrance important?

All roses fall into three groupings: *Species Roses*, *Old Garden Roses (OGR's)* or *Modern Roses*. *Species Roses* are the origin of all other roses and existed before man. Next are the *OGR's* which belong to classes that existed before 1867. There are 22 OGR classes, each with distinctive features. The beauty of OGR's often lies in their outstanding fragrance. The era of the *Modern Rose* started in 1867 with the introduction of the first hybrid tea, La France, representing a new breed of flower forms and growth habits. The most popular classes of *Modern Roses* include: **Hybrid Teas** (HT) which tend to grow upright and often have one bloom per stem, similar to florist roses; **Floribundas** (F) which tend to have flowers that grow in clusters on lower growing, mound shaped bushes; **Grandifloras** (Gr) which combine the characteristics of Hybrid Teas and Floribundas; **Climbers** (Cl) which have long canes that normally need tying to some structure for support; **Miniatures** (Min) and **Mini-floras** (MinFl) which are normally dwarf bushes that produce small roses in great numbers; and **Shrubs** (S) including English Roses.

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Consulting Rosarians (CRs) are certified by **THE AMERICAN ROSE SOCIETY** after successfully demonstrating expert knowledge on rose culture. A select few rosarians who have been CRs for at least 10 years and provided outstanding service to others, have been elevated to the status of Master Consulting Rosarian (M). All are available free of charge to assist and advise on rose culture and problems, help anyone start new rose gardens and in every way share their knowledge with others. You may feel free to call upon them with questions or for assistance.

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