



# Rose Gardening Tips

## from Weeks Roses

Please take one

Your rose garden can be **easy and enjoyable** if you follow these basics:

1. **Plant in the right spot.** Give roses at least 6 hours of sun and improve the soil roses are planted in.
2. **Regular watering.** At least 1" per week, that's approximately three gallons per plant.
3. **Regular fertilizing.** Feed your roses once a month, using a complete nursery-grade granular fertilizer. Feed twice a month if using a liquid feed.
4. **Regular disease control.** Spray your roses once a week to prevent fungus, mainly blackspot.

If you follow the above routines consistently, your roses will reward you with an abundance of beautiful blooms and many years of enjoyment.

### Getting started on your rose garden:

#### Planting

First, select the best location for your roses. Roses need a minimum of six hours of sunlight, preferably morning sun and afternoon shade. Roses prefer a pH between 5.8 and 6.2. When planting a rose, prepare a hole at least 18 inches deep and 18 inches wide. Refill the hole around the rose with a soil mixture approximating 1/3 peat moss, 1/3 compost or composted manure, and 1/3 of soil dug from the hole; also add one cup each of lime (depending on pH), gypsum, and bone meal. Plant your **bareroot rose** bush by forming a cone of soil in the hole so that when the roots are set on the cone the bud union of the bush will be just above ground level. Hand pack soil around the bush and water deeply. If planting a **potted rose** bush, carefully remove the container by first cutting out the bottom of the pot, then set the pot in the hole. Next, carefully cut the side of the pot and remove it. Fill in soil around the roots.

**Important note:** If planting a **bare root** rose (planted in container less than two weeks or not at all), there is one "law": **always keep the roots moist**. Soak your rose in water for at least two hours before planting. When ready to plant, prune away any broken canes or roots. Prune your canes to balance the length of the roots. **The canes must also be kept moist**. Despite the moisture around the roots, the rose canes are still susceptible to drying out from the wind. To avoid drying the canes, cover them entirely with a mound of loose moist soil or mulch. Sprinkle the mound every two to three days with water. Once the new growth shoots are visible (2-3"), use a stream of water to wash the mulch away from the canes.

#### Water and Fertilization

Roses require about 1" of water per week, that's three gallons of water per plant. Roses also need fertilization once a month. There are many fertilizers available at your garden center. You can use liquids such as Mills' Easy Feed® or Miracle-Gro®, granulars (e.g. Fertilome), slow release products like Osmocote® and Stagreen®, or organics such as Mills' Magic® or Espoma's Rose-tone®. Make September your last fertilizer application so the plants can harden off for the winter. **Important note:** when planting bare root roses, **do not** use any fertilizer at planting time as this will burn the new roots. Start fertilizing when growth is 2-4" in length.

#### Disease Control

Black Spot fungus is the enemy of most rose bushes. You should start spraying to prevent fungus as soon as new foliage sprouts, and continue spraying through the fall. Chemical sprays require applications every 7 to 14 days, since your roses are constantly developing new leaves. Some of the common products that can be used are: Immunox® (Spectracide), Systemic Fungicide (Fertilome®), and others.

#### Insect Control

Always spray to *prevent* diseases; but wait until insects appear before spraying. Water is one of the best tools for prevention. A stiff water spray on the plants early in the day will blow off and discourage many insects. Aphids are common and easy to control. Japanese Beetles usually begin to appear late June through early August. TIP: enjoy your spring blooms and then cut back your roses about mid June; your

roses will be re-blooming in August when the beetles will be gone. With all chemicals: ***Always follow label directions and wear gloves and protective clothing.***

### Pruning

For best flower production weekly cut, prune, or deadhead, your rose blooms. On young rose bushes, cut relatively short-stemmed blooms to leave as much foliage on the bush as possible. In the fall, after the roses have stopped blooming, cut your plants back to about waist high.

## **Rose Care...Month by Month**

### January

Anytime from mid-December through January you should apply a **dormant spray of Lime-Sulfur**. Spray the canes, the ground; coat everything in the garden. This smothers all the left over fungus spores from last season and will help get your plants off to a disease-free start. You can apply lime-sulfur again in two weeks if you had severe problems during the previous growing season.

### February

**Prune** roses back to four to six strong canes, 12 to 24 inches long. Also, clean up any old debris in the rose bed (leaves, sticks, weeds, etc.) You can begin regular watering.

### March

**Begin fertilizing** when your bushes have a couple inches of new growth. They enjoy formulas heavy in potassium (K) and benefit from a helping of lime (depending on pH). Watch for aphids during warm weather and **begin spraying for fungus** as new leaves appear.

### April

Apply some new **mulch** if needed. Pine straw is a favorite mulch in the south; it is very effective in cooling the soil and controlling weeds.

### April through October

Continue to follow your regular schedule of **water-feed-spray** for rose success. If bugs appear, apply insecticide as needed. Often a stiff blast from the hose will discourage aphids and mites (spray from underneath the foliage as well). Remove new or spent blooms to encourage more growth. Cut down into thick wood to promote larger blooms.

### September

Stop fertilizing after this month to allow roses to harden off for the winter months.

### October-November

Apply lime to established beds. Begin preparing new beds by "double digging" (digging down about 18") and incorporating composted manure, etc. Keep watering established roses. Relocate any roses you wish to move.

### December

Cut rose bushes back to about waist high. This will prevent wind damage during the winter.

- **Ask for Weeks Roses at your local independent garden center.**
- **Please visit our web site at [www.weeksroses.com](http://www.weeksroses.com)**

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