

WINTER ROSE CARE

Helpful hints for tool care, pruning, spraying, fertilizing, planting.

By Karen Ernsberger, Master Rosarian



GATHER GEAR + TOOLS

Weather-proof jacket and pants that are warm and durable enough to hold up to thorn grazes. Carhartt brand is ideal.



Pruning tool bucket with good quality tools. Invest in well-made ones. With good maintenance, they will last for years.

- Showa Atlas 620 triple-dipped PVC gloves
- Bypass Pruners (ARS 120DX Japanese Corp)
- Felco 2
- Pruning saw
- Bypass Loppers (Bahco Pro narrow head)



Green bin or garden debris bag for cuttings and leaves.



Hand rake and a root lifter for weeds growing around the rose.

Pine-Sol or a spray of 70% Isopropyl Alcohol and water to disinfect (dip) your pruning tools in before and after each plant you prune.



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TOOL CLEANING + CARE

Clean and oil tools regularly. We suggest before and after major pruning session.

Wipe blade, rivets/hinges, and other metal surfaces with an oily cloth.

Keep cutting edges sharp; several passes with a good oil stone will usually suffice.

Paint, varnish, or regularly treat wooden handles with linseed oil.

Keep cutting edges sharp; several passes (in one direction only) with a good oil stone will usually suffice. Paint, varnish or regularly treat wooden handles with linseed oil.

Use tools properly. Don't twist or strain pruners, loppers or saws. Don't cut wires with pruning tools, it ruins blades, requiring the use of a mill file to reshape the bevel, removing the dents caused by hitting the wire.



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PRUNING STEPS

- 1 Disinfect your pruning tools before pruning and after each plant you prune.
- 2 Remove older, broken, woody, diseased, or problem canes by cutting them at the point of origin or back to a strong cane. Leave healthy green canes larger than a pencil diameter (1/4").
- 3 Remove crossing canes less than 1/4 inch. Remove canes in the center of the plant for better air flow.
- 4 Cut cane to an outward facing bud to encourage growth away from the center, cut 1/4" above a bud.
- 5 Cleanup: discard cut canes and leaves from the plant and ground to remove any fungus, disease, and insect eggs. Discard debris into green bin, not compost pile.
- 6 Roses are forgiving. They benefit from any pruning, along with regular watering and feeding.



Image courtesy Gail Timble



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PRUNING SPECIFICATIONS

Hybrid Teas & Grandifloras:

leave 3-6 canes at around 12-18" tall

Floribundas:

leave 5-8 canes at 18" tall

Climbers:

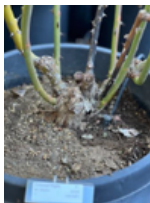
Select 4-8 good canes at length to cover the fence, arbor, or structure.

Old Garden Roses:

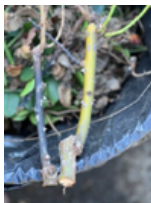
-Repeat Bloomers: leave 5-8 canes at around 18" tall.

-One-Time Bloomers: Prune in Spring AFTER blooming. Remove dead, broken, diseased, or problem limbs by cutting them at the point of origin or back to a strong lateral branch or shoot. This often opens the canopy sufficiently, requiring no further pruning.

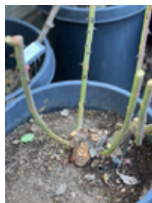
"Celestial Nights"



Before



Dead Canes Removed



After/Opened Up

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AFTER PRUNING ROSE CARE

Spray with Dormant Spray (mixture of 3 Tbl Horticultural Oil and 1-1/2 to 2 teaspoons Liqui-Cop) after pruning with at least 3 dry days following. If it rains too soon after spraying, the spray may be washed away, necessitating the need to respray.

Spread fertilizer and compost around rose bushes. If not enough rain, water top inch of soil to prevent rose from drying out.

BARE ROOT PLANTING OR RELOCATING

For in-ground rose: dig a hole 2 ft wide x 2 ft deep. For container rose, use 15-gallon size pot.

Mix even amounts of planting soil, compost, and bone meal into the hole or pot.

For bare root roses with saw dust packed on roots: remove sawdust and trim any broken roots. Prune broken, small, or crossing stems before planting. If the roses are in grow-pots, cut away or split pots to prevent root bind. Spread out the roots in the hole or pot, add more soil, and press down firmly with gloved hands.

For both in-ground & pot, plant with the crown 2 inches above the soil.

Year 1: use gentle liquid fertilizer such as fish emulsion or seaweed as new roses burn easily. Deep water for 10 minutes minimum at least once a week at the base (not on the leaves). Do not dry out. You want the roots to "establish" by growing down and deep.