



Old Garden Roses: Repeat vs. One-Time Bloomers

A quick, rose gardener-friendly comparison to help you choose the right old roses for your space, style, and maintenance preferences.

Repeat-Blooming Old Garden Roses (OGR)

Repeat-Bloomers are ideal for those seeking flowers most of the year in a traditional rose form with modern convenience.

Bloom habit:	Flower in multiple flushes from spring through fall (best in mild climates)
Common classes:	Bourbons, Portlands, Chinas, Teas, Noisettes
What to expect:	Longer flowering season; often excellent fragrance; moderate pruning encourages repeat bloom; ideal for mixed borders and frequent cutting
Pruning basics:	Prune lightly to moderately in late winter and deadhead to encourage rebloom
Well-known examples:	Old Blush; Mutabilis; Mme. Isaac Pereire; Comte de Chambord; Blush Noisette

One-Time Blooming Old Garden Roses (OTR)

One-Time Bloomers are best for those who want a single bloom period with a breathtaking spring show and low maintenance after bloom. One-time bloomers offer a historic or naturalistic garden feel.

Bloom habit:	One blooming period per year; a spectacular flush in spring or early summer
Common classes:	Gallicas; Albas; Centifolias; Summer Damasks; Species roses and ramblers
What to expect:	Massive, dramatic bloom display; often intense, classic fragrance; beautiful hips and foliage after bloom; very hardy and often disease-resistant;
Pruning basics:	Prune only after flowering (if needed). Do not prune in winter as it will remove the coming year's blooms.
Well-known examples:	Madame Hardy; Charles de Mills; Rosa mundi; Paul's Himalayan Musk

OGR Features	Repeat- Bloomers	One-Time Bloomers
Bloom frequency	Flower in multiple flushes from spring through fall (best in mild climates)	One spectacular flush in spring or early summer
Pruning time	Late winter	After flowering
Fragrance	Often strong	Often exceptional
Maintenance	Moderate	Low
Garden style	Formal or mixed	Historic or romantic

Tips for Northern California Gardens

Many repeat-blooming old roses (especially Chinas, Teas, and Noisettes) perform exceptionally well in mild, coastal climates, while one-time bloomers provide unforgettable spring displays with minimal effort the rest of the year. Choose one—or mix both—for a season-long garden with a show-stopping spring finale.