

Growing Roses In The South Okanagan

First Prepared to the Master Gardeners by Don Burnett 2019

Revised by Rick Sauder Dec. 2026

Roses

Roses are woody perennial flowering plants of the genus *Rosa*. They are in the family Rosaceae. There are over three hundred species and thousands of cultivars. They form a group of plants that can be erect shrubs, miniature plants or large climbers and huge rambling roses. Roses can be upright, shrubby, climbing, or trailing, depending on the cultivar, the stems can be armed with sharp prickles, or virtually thornless. No genus has a wider range of size, colour, shape and flower form than the rose for landscape and garden purposes. There is a rose variety that can adapt to any garden setting. In fact, they are among the most versatile of garden plants. They come in every shape, size, and colour imaginable with shapes, forms and dimensions. Their versatility with respect to bloom form, colour, and to plant size make it possible find a cultivar to please most everyone.! Many repeat blooming varieties have a long blooming season providing a rich tapestry of colour in the garden through the seasons. The Old Garden Roses and most species roses are once blooming in late spring but with bountiful bloom for a month or more to provide a gorgeous display as a specimen plant or hedge rose. To top off this versatility as a garden plant, many, not all, roses are intensely fragrant.

The genus *Rosa* includes over 360 species divided into four subgenera:

Hulthemia with one or two species from southwest Asia;

Hesperrhodos with two species from southwestern North America;

Platyrhodon with one species from East Asia; and






Rosa, the largest subgenus, divided into 11 sections.

Rosa is the subgenus from which virtually all hybridized (bred by humans), roses are derived from.



Although roses have been around as cultivated plants since before Roman times the history of the modern rose begins in France with the Empress Josephine. She produced the first written history of the cultivation of roses and is believed to have hosted the first rose exhibition, in 1810. It was said she had most of the known varieties of roses at the time in her garden numbering close to two hundred. By the beginning of the 20th century three primary classes of roses were recognized; Species roses, Old Garden Roses and Modern Roses.

Rose Provenance, History and Types **Species Roses**

European Garden Roses	China Roses	Musk Roses	Wichuriana Hybrids	Other Hybrids	
Portland Roses 	Bourbon Roses 	Noisette Roses 	Hybrid Musk Roses 	Ramblers 	Rugosa Hybrids 
Hybrid Perpetuals 	Tea Roses 	Polyantha Roses 	Modern Climbing Roses 	Miniature Roses 	Shrub Roses 
Hybrid Teas 	Floribunda Roses 	English Roses 	Various Other Garden Roses Explorer and Morden Series 		



Everyone’s nose is different—or rather, everyone’s perception of scent is different. Some people have very little sense of smell—so it’s fine if you simply enjoy roses for their color and form.

Roses are traditional symbols of love and romance. Rose essential oil, also known as attar, is made from the Damask Rose (*Rosa damascene*) or the Cabbage Rose (*Rosa centifolia*). Because the oil is so concentrated, it’s diluted before it’s used commercially.

A rose’s petals contain its perfume, although some stamens smell of musk or cloves. The smell of roses is thought to be relaxing and restorative because it encourages us to breathe deeply and slowly. Rose oil is among the most expensive of all oils. It’s made up of 300 active ingredients. Not all of them have been identified yet.

Rose oil, like fine wines, can be affected by many factors such as the soil the plants are grown in, the amount of rainfall they receive, and the altitude where they are raised. It takes from 50 to 60,000 rose blooms—all of which are picked by hand—to make one ounce of the finest rose attar.

A rose’s perfume becomes stronger before a storm moves in.

You can learn about the scent of roses by comparing them to each other. Sniff one blossom and describe the fragrance; is it fruity, sweet, spicy or musky? Don’t experiment too long, or your nose will get fatigued. Try again later, or do as perfumers do, and take deep breaths through a piece of wool, or eat some dry bread, to refresh your olfactory sense.

Medicinal Uses, Aromatherapy

Key Actions

- antidepressant
- antispasmodic
- aphrodisiac
- astringent
- antibacterial
- antiviral
- antiseptic
- anti-inflammatory
- blood tonic
- cleansing
- digestive stimulant
- expectorant
- increases bile production
- kidney tonic
- menstrual regulator

Key Components

- volatile oil
- vitamins and minerals (especially A, B, E, and K, potassium and iron)

Medicinal Parts

Flowers, petals, rosehips, root, root bark, essential oil



The Apothecary Rose

Rosa Gallica Officinalis

History

In the 1st century CE, Pliny the Elder recorded thirty-two different medicinal uses of the rose. In the 19th century, it was proven that roses contain essential oils. Rose oil is distilled from the petals and used in aromatherapy. Roses were grown in medieval gardens more for medicine and food than for beauty. There were dozens of varieties of roses in North America. The Native Americans learned how to use whatever grew in their region, as a medicine and, in cases of emergency, as a food. The leaves, petals, hips, and roots were widely used for a variety of conditions, including colds, fevers, diarrhea, influenza, stomach troubles, and eye inflammations.

With the discovery of vitamin C in the 1930s, and subsequent claims by Linus Pauling that massive doses of the nutrient could cure the common cold, rosehips have been of much interest because of their high content of this nutrient.

Unlike Western medicine, all indigenous cultures believe that there is no separation between the physical and the mental or spiritual being, and both must be assessed before healing occurs. The same belief has long been held true regarding the rose and is seen in this saying, "Roses are good for the skin and the soul". Roses continued as official medicine until well into the 1930s (British Pharmacopoeia) when the tincture of the Apothecary's Rose was prescribed for sore throats. Roses were also widely used as mild astringents and to flavour other medicines.

Nature's Roses, Species Roses

Species Roses are wild or indigenous roses and are often have single-petaled flowers (4-11 petals). They vary in size from 2 to more than 20 feet. They are listed according to their Latin name, beginning with R. for Rosa and can have common synonyms. For example, R foetida bicolor is also known as Austrian Copper.

Old Garden Roses

In 1966 the American Rose Society defined old garden roses as those that existed prior to 1867, the year of the introduction of the very first hybrid tea, 'La France'. Within this generic definition, there are number of popular subdivisions which are based on natural historical developments as well as characteristics. The flower form can be quartered, cupped, imprecated, expanded, reflexed, globular or compact. After an initial spring crop of blooms, some varieties may produce no more flowers the rest of the year, but their hip production does add a different kind of beauty to the garden. The beauty of the old garden roses often lies in the heavy fragrance they can impart to the garden. Old garden roses can be divided into the following popular classes:

Alba Known as "white roses", these plants are upright, often climbing, have dense blue-green foliage and are disease resistant.

Ayrshire A group of climbing, sprawling roses that originated in Scotland. They bloom only once a year.

Bourbon First repeat flowering roses developed from the Hybrid Chinas. They derive their name from the location of the first members of the class, Isle de Bourbon in the Indian Ocean. Plant size can range from 2 to 15 feet. These are repeat bloomers.

Boursault A small group of thorn-less rambling type roses developed by the French gardener who gave his name to the class. These bloom only once a year.

Centifolia: These Dutch hybridized roses derive their class name from the fact the flowers often contain more than 100 petals. Plants are 4 to 8 feet tall and winter hardy. They are also referred as Cabbage Roses and are featured in Dutch flower paintings of the 17th century. They bloom once each year.

Damask: these roses are best known for their intense fragrance. Plants generally range from 3 to 6 feet. Some varieties are repeat blooming.

Hybrid China: plants are generally small, ranging from 2 to 3 feet tall. Stems are often too weak to support the clusters blooms, which have a spicy fragrance. Plants are not hardy and require winter protection in cold climates. Repeat blooming.

Hybrid Gallica Plants are small, 3 to 4 feet tall and are winter hardy. Blooms are fragrant and come in brilliant colours. They bloom only once each year.

Hybrid Perpetual: Popular during the 19th century, these roses are characterized by their repeat bloom, plant size (about 6 feet tall, upright), fragrance and colour range (mostly pinks and reds) Incidentally a forerunner of the Hybrid Tea

Moss Roses: Named for the mossy thorn growth on the peduncle just below the bloom and sepals, this group releases a pine-scented oleoresin when the moss is rubbed between the fingers- Plants are generally winter hardy and 3 to 6 feet tall. Some varieties are repeat blooming.

Noisette: This classification originated in the US by Philippe Noisette of Charleston, SC, who later introduced them in France when he moved there in 1817. Plants are large and sprawling often reaching up to 20 feet tall. Blooms are produced in fragrant clusters.

Portland: This small group of roses was derived from crosses involving hybrid gallica, damask, centifolia and hybrid china. They are small in stature usually 4 feet tall, repeat blooming and have very short peduncles. Class was named in honour of the Dutchess of Portland.

Tea: Characterized as small to medium sized plants, 4 feet tall. Teas have large blooms on weak stems which causes the flower to droop. Flower form is symmetrical and the forerunner of modern Hybrid teas along with the Hybrid Perpetual

Modern Roses

The era of modern roses was established in 1867 with the introduction of the first hybrid tea, La France by the French breeder Guillot. This variety was considered unique for a number of horticultural reasons. One, it possessed the general habit of the hybrid perpetual as well as the elegant shaped buds and free flowering character of a tea rose. By the late 20th century, more than 10,000 hybrid teas had been bred with great success. Breeders were quick to recognize that planned parenthood could evolve new flower forms and size, growth habit and colours. Therefore, the following new classifications based on growth habit evolved.

The Most Popular Three Classes: Hybrid Tea, Floribunda and Grandiflora

These are by far still the most popular and generally make up the bulk of rose selections in most garden centres, even in the Okanagan Valley. However, it should be noted that many of these varieties are not reliably winter hardy in the Okanagan, especially during extreme winter cold snaps, which are now occurring regularly due to our changing climate. We have had winters in 2010, 2015, 2022, and especially 2023 that killed many of these varieties which had been thriving in gardens for years before. The City of Oliver lost many of its very old Hybrid Tea cultivars in the 2023 Polar Vortex outbreak.

Anyone wishing to grow these less hardy varieties should be aware that winter protection, in the form of mounded compost, or wood mulch is a very good idea. The City of Penticton Rose Garden is a wonderful showcase of these modern varieties. The rosarian with the City of Penticton mounds the roses in the Penticton Rose Garden to a depth of 15, or 20 cms with compost late in fall. This garden has suffered no winter kill of its plants because of this winter protection regime.

Hybrid Tea: This group is the most popular and many of the names you recognize are in this group. Variety names such as Chrysler Imperial, Mr. Lincoln, Crimson Glory, Miss All-American Beauty, and of course Peace and Tropicana roll off the tongue of most rose enthusiasts. HT's usually grow to about 1m but not always. They do however have consistently larger blooms on sturdy canes. In most cases there is only one bloom per cane but sometimes a main bloom will open first followed by 3 or 4 secondary blossoms that are not quite as large. Some gardeners remove the side buds to let the main blossom become as large as it can get, especially when a competition is involved. Hybrid tea roses are a cross between the tea rose from China and the hybrid perpetual. In 1945 the 'Peace' rose heralded the modern era of the elegantly formed hybrid teas. So dramatic was the overwhelming public acceptance and praise accorded this variety that its place in history was instantaneous. Since 1945, many thousands of new hybrid teas have been bred and introduced.

Floribunda: Floribunda roses were bred from the Hybrid Tea and the Polyantha groups. They're generally, but not always, shorter (50-75 cm) with clusters of blossoms. In most cases they are a bit more winter hardy than the HT's. The floribundas are quite floriferous and can be relied on for a mass showing of colour all season. Some of the better-known varieties are Europeana, Pinocchio, Sun Flare, and probably the best white you'll find, Iceberg.

Grandiflora: In 1954, the introduction of a rose bred from crossing the hybrid tea 'Charlotte Armstrong' with the floribunda 'Floradora', resulted in a carmine-rose and dawn pink variety. It displayed not only the characteristics of a hybrid tea but also the ability to bear clusters or trusses and grow to a commanding height of 6 to 8 feet or more. To accommodate this variety the class of grandiflora was born. 'Queen Elizabeth had the distinction of being the very first member of this class. Grandifloras make an outstanding back drop to any rose garden. Because of their columnar upright habit, they can be used to fill in a corner, line a fence, or enhance a wall. The Grandifloras produce a cluster of large blossoms on top of tall sturdy canes. They are quite hardy but do appreciate some protection during colder winters. Varieties include Arizona, Granada, Montezuma, Mount Shasta and of course the still popular Queen Elizabeth.

Miniature & Mini-flora: These classes have increased in popularity due to their novelty and versatility. They can be used for edging beds, growing in containers and rockeries or even for taking indoors as temporary pot plants for decoration. The height of the

average plant is about 15 to 30 inches, and flower form and foliage are indeed miniature versions of both hybrid teas and floribundas.

Mini-flora roses are a new classification adopted by the American Rose Society in 1999 to recognize another step in the evolution of the rose, i.e. intermediate in bloom size and foliage falling between miniatures and floribundas.

Large-flowered Climber and Hybrid Wichuraiana: These roses are very reliable in the Okanagan and can be planted wherever there is some sort of support either manmade such as a trellis or arbor, or naturally supported by a tree or rock face. Most varieties put on a huge show of colour in June/July and some will repeat bloom although less spectacularly. Some of the more popular varieties are Don Juan, America, Blossom-time, Joseph's Coat and Blaze.

Shrub (Classic & Modern): Shrub rose bushes are defined by the American Rose Society (ARS) as "A class of hardy, easy-care plants that encompass bushy roses that do not fit in any other category of rose bush." Some shrub roses make good ground covers while others work well to form hedges or screening in the landscape. Shrub rose bushes can have single or double blooms in many different colors. Some of the shrub rose bushes will bloom repeatedly and bloom very well while some others bloom only once a year.

I've left this class to the last because of its importance to our gardening and landscaping today and the fact there seems to be more work being done breeding new varieties and groups than any other Class.

Shrubs are easily characterized by their sprawling habit. There are five popular subdivisions within the class: hybrid kordesii, hybrid moyesii, hybrid musk, hybrid rugosa and shrub. They can grow from 5 to 15 feet or more in every direction given the correct climate and growing conditions. Noted for their hardiness, they are usually vigorous and produce large quantities of clusters of flowers.

Canada's Fabulous Rose Breeding Success

Canada has a long and successful history of breeding cold-tolerant roses. In 1900, William Saunders started a government-funded rose breeding program in Ottawa, producing 'Agnes', which was introduced in 1922. In the 1960s, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada set up rose breeding programs at Morden, Manitoba and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. Significant hybridizing was being done by Felicitas Svejda. Working with the hardy pillar rose, *Rosa kordesii* from Germany, and various compact repeat-blooming rugosa roses, such as 'Fra Dagmar Hastrup' and 'Schneezwerg', Svejda ended up producing 25 hardy cultivars, which were named after Canadian explorers. Many of these cultivars are grown and prized in eastern and northern European countries and in fact some that are extinct in Canada are commercially available in Europe. This is because Agriculture Canada did not have a marketing program and so the roses were not promoted as would be those developed by commercial firms.

Some Canadian Rose Hybridizers

Brad Jalbert



Dr. Felicitas Svejda



Robert M. Erskine



Prairie Peace

George Bugnet



Henry H. Marshal



Dr. Frank L. Skinner



Explorer Series: Agriculture Canada began a rose breeding program in the 1960s under the direction of breeder Felicitas Svejda. Her objective was to use roses from these earlier efforts and cross them with newly developed roses from Europe to create a series of roses that would be hardy, disease resistant, repeat blooming and easy to propagate from cuttings. A key component in this program was a new hybrid, *Rosa kordesii*, developed by the firm of Kordes in Germany. This rose was a relatively hardy pillar rose with long, vigorous shoots and exceedingly healthy foliage. Dr. Svejda also used several repeat blooming and compact *Rosa rugosa* varieties such as 'Fra Dagmar Hastrup' and 'Schneezwerg'. The results of this ambitious program have forever changed northern rose gardens. Varieties include such familiar explorers of early Canada, John Cabot, Henry Hudson and others.

The Parkland Series: Between 1967 and 2004, another series of 16 hardy shrub roses were developed at Morden called the Parkland series. Canadian Parkland Roses were developed to withstand the cold Canadian winters, but will also thrive in warm and humid summers. The Parkland roses are very easy to care for, needing minimal spraying for disease and insects- Although very hardy, the Parkland Series is not quite so cold hardy and disease resistant as the Canadian Explorer Series. However, they are "own root" plants, so even when they die back to the snow line, your rose will come back true. Pruning requirements are minimal.

Many of these roses have Morden in their name, such as 'Modern Centennial', 'Morden Blush' and 'Morden Sunrise'. Others include 'Winnipeg Parks' and 'Hope for Humanity'

Canadian Artist Series: From the developers of the Explorer and Parkland Series of roses, these next generation roses celebrate the great Canadian artists who created lasting works of beauty on canvas, in stalwort sculpture and through singing and musical prose, just as we create enduring beauty in our gardens. These roses epitomize the Canadian gardener in every way, hardy and resilient, standing strong against our Canadian winters, yet exquisitely beautiful contemporaries of the finest modern roses. Varieties include such familiar giants as Emily Carr, Oscar Peterson, Bill Reid and others.

Canada's National Hardy Rose Program (Vineland Research and Innovation Centre)

The rose program at Vineland focuses on breeding cold hardy garden and landscape roses, developing disease resistance screening techniques and understanding consumer preference and markets for Canadian roses. The first commercial releases from Canada's National Hardy Rose Program are part of Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection- The roses are low-maintenance and continuously bloom all summer long. They are also disease resistant and winter hardy to 40°C meaning there are no shrinking violets in this collection.

These roses are products of Canada's national rose program established in 2010 at Vineland in partnership with the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association. The first release in the collection, Canadian Shield, was named Canada Blooms' 2017 Plant of the Year. The second release, Chinook Sunrise™ in 2019, followed by Aurora Borealis in 2021. You can see an

outstanding collection of Canadian bred roses in the Canadian Heritage Rose Garden in Summerland.

Easy Elegance Series: Easy Elegance Roses have been specially bred to be tough and reliable without giving up good looks. From the hybrid tea side of the family, Easy Elegance® roses get big flowers with plenty of rebloom and glossy green foliage. From the shrub rose side of the family, Easy Elegance® gets disease resistance, superior heat tolerance and extreme cold hardiness. The best feature of Easy Elegance® Roses, is that these roses are not sprayed for black spot or mildew during the breeding process, ensuring only the strongest roses survive. Because they're so tough, they're easy to enjoy in your garden.

English Roses: English roses are a class of shrub rose developed by English rose breeder David Austin. These wonderful, often exceptionally fragrant, roses are also known as Austin Roses by many Rosarians and have an old-fashioned rose look to them. This class includes rose bushes named Mary Rose, Graham Thomas, Golden Celebration, Crown Princess Margareta and Gertrude Jekyll to name a few. There are also some climbing and rambling roses in this group. There are a myriad of growth habits, sizes, colours and fragrances in this group and they do exceptionally well in the Okanagan, most being more than cold hardy enough for our most severe winters. Many of them have excellent repeat bloom, others bloom in less regular flushes. However, they all put on a spectacular spring flush in late June, early July. We have one of the outstanding collections of English Roses in North America at the Summerland Ornamental Gardens.

Meidiland Series: This type of rose was developed mainly for mass amenity planting. In the late 20th century, traditional hybrid tea and floribunda rose varieties fell out of favour with many gardeners and landscapers, as they are often labour and chemical intensive plants susceptible to pest and disease problems. So-called "landscape" roses (also known as "ground cover" roses) have thus been developed to fill the consumer desire for a garden rose that offers colour, form and fragrance, but is also low maintenance and easy to care for. Most have the following characteristics: a lower growing habit, usually under 60 cm (24 inches), repeat flowering, disease and pest resistant, most grow on their own roots, and they require minimal pruning.

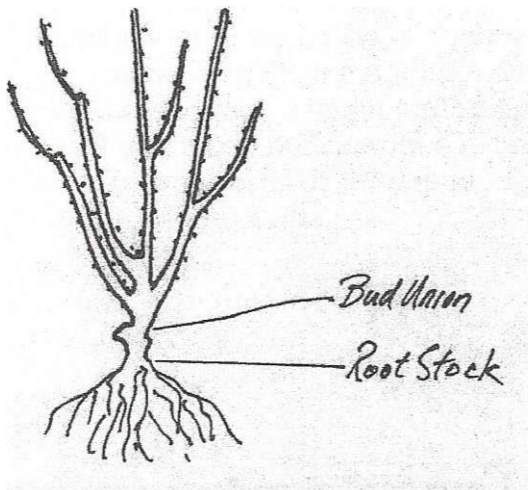
Much of the previous information on rose history And classification has been taken from the American Rose Society 2016 "Selecting Roses" Handbook

Growing Roses

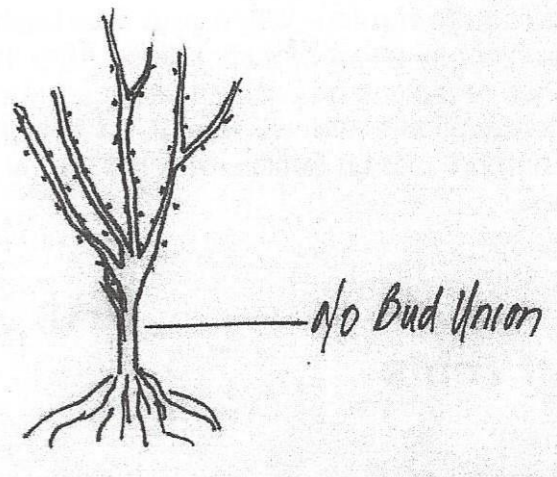
Choosing a good rose bush — Most roses today are purchased in containers. Some however are found in packages early in the season. These should be planted immediately after purchase, because their shelf life in the package is short. Most often the packaged roses are promotional plants and are of lesser quality than the container types. I do not recommend purchasing a packaged rose once it has started to grow in the pack because there is too much shock for it when the roots are disturbed. Look for plants with at least 3 strong canes (some classes are exceptions)

Roses are grown in two different ways, each with its own benefits. Most of the roses on the market are budded onto a 'vigorous' root stock. Common rose rootstock varieties include 'Dr. Huey', used for its consistency and long budding season, and 'Fortuniana', which performs well in warmer, sandy soils and is nematode-tolerant. Other varieties like 'Manetti' are favored for their flexible roots, especially in regions like California. Grafted roses grown by Canadian producers are often grafted onto the species *Rosa multiflora*, which does well in our colder climate and does not sucker badly, like Dr. Huey for instance.

Many rose varieties of roses are being grown on their own roots now, if the variety is vigorous and suitable for growing own root. At the Summerland Ornamental Gardens, we take cuttings every summer from many of the English Roses, as well as from our Canadian Rose collection. Suitability for propagation and growing as own root plants varies from variety to variety, some root easily and grow vigorously, others won't strike, or sulk without a rootstock. As a general rule, HTs and Floribunda's are usually grown as grafted plants. See the illustration below.



Budded onto wild root stock

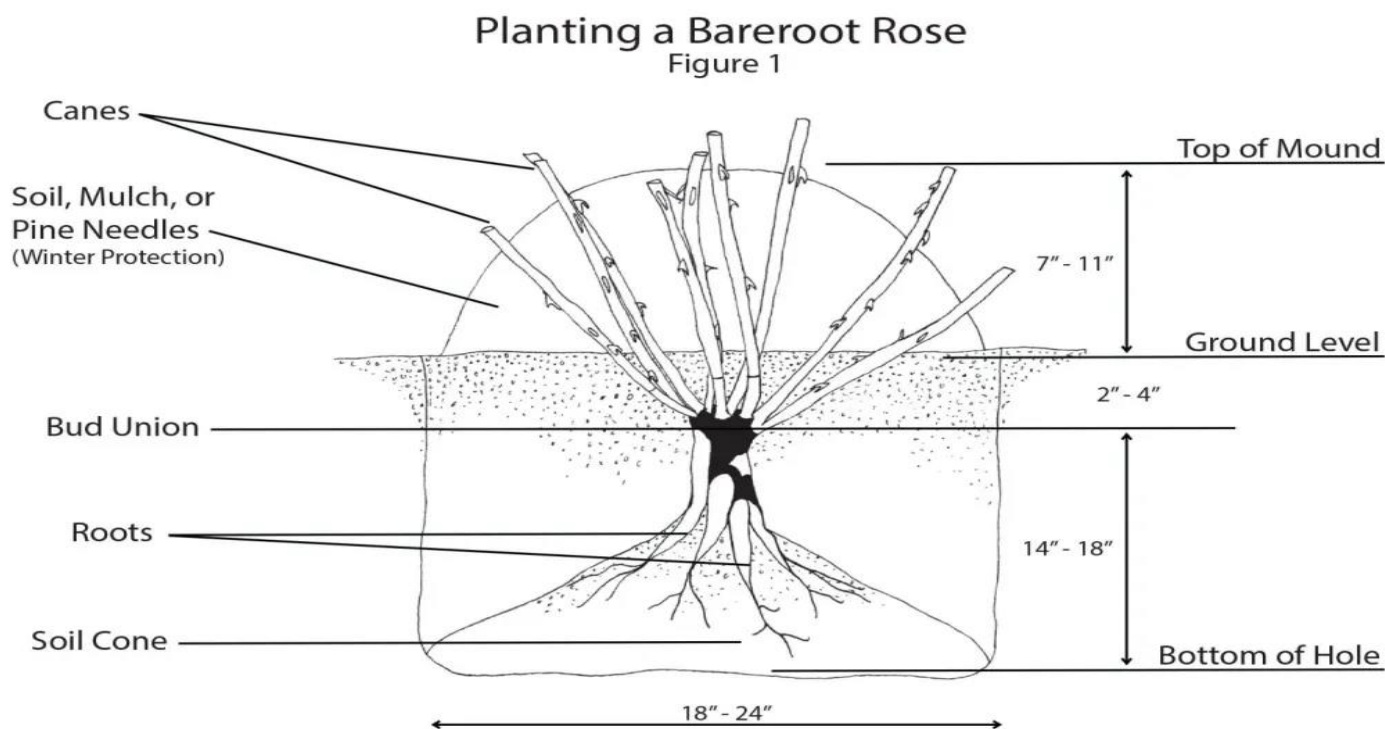


Grown on its own roots

Exposure — For the most part roses do their best with at least 5 to 6 hours of sunshine per day. If roses are planted in the shade they don't bloom as well, they tend to stretch in their growth and are much more prone to diseases. Old Garden Roses are generally

a lot more tolerant of shade, or dappled shade if that is a location where roses are wanted.

Soil conditions — Good drainage is very important with a fair amount of organic content. A pH of 6.5 is ideal, but most roses will tolerate our higher pH (7.5 on average) here in the Okanagan. Sandy loam is suitable as well provided the roses are fed with compost or other organic fertilizer on a regular basis.



Recommended planting procedure —

Dig a hole with sides large enough to accommodate the root ball easily and deep enough to cover the bud union if the plant is grafted. Rough the root mass up enough to have root tips exposed especially if the new plant is root bound.

You want the roots to spread out laterally to access air. Amend the native soil to be used as backfill a bit if you wish, using compost or composted manure, don't overdo it, and stir in some bone meal plant depending how much back fill there is). Place the rose in the hole and fill in with the prepared material making sure the bud union is at least 1.5" (4cm) deep. This helps with winter protection and promotes new wood from the bud union. The bud union should be 3 inches, (8 cm()), below the surface the exception being roses on their own roots).

Amending planting soil when planting roses is a topic for which there is some debate and diverse advice. My own view, supported by professional plantsman and rosarian Jason Crouch of Fraser Valley Rose Farm, is that the planting hole should not be overly large and you need not dig deep and wide to surround the plant with highly amended soil.

If you think about it, your new plant will likely try to fill a large hole filled with richly amended soil with root mass, and they may tend not to grow into the native soil surrounding it. This can result in a rose that is growing almost in the same manner as if it were in a pot. So as long as the soil where you wish to plant is reasonable, the rose will thrive if properly watered, fed and cared for. Remember to create some drainage if your existing ground consists of clay. Roses do not like overly wet soil.

Feeding requirements — When your rose bush is first planted water it in with a transplanter liquid formulation containing a root stimulator. After that it should not be fed heavily for a couple of months.

Established roses can be fed with either a granular fertilizer three or four times a year or a watersoluble formulation every two weeks. Each of these can be found in a formulation especially for roses. For more info on fertilizer ask me for my Garden Expert sheet entitled "Understanding Fertilizers"

Rose Care and Mulching

“Mulching” is the addition of a protective layer around the base of your roses. This process helps your roses to retain moisture, suppresses weeds and provides valuable nutrients for your roses as they grow.

The Okanagan Valley is a great place to grow roses, with a couple of caveats:

First Caveat – the winters can be harsh. We grow our gardens in climate zone 6b. Add to this the strong winds in the valley and the wind chill can easily cause winter damage equivalent to zone 5b as it did in the winters of 2015/16 and again 2021/22.

We grow and display mainly hardy shrub roses in the Summerland Ornamental Gardens. The hardier shrub roses breeze through an Okanagan winter without protection.

If you wish to grow the more tender roses, then mounding with mulch around the plants in the fall is a simple way to help winter protect your tender roses.–

Second Caveat – It gets hot here! It doesn't rain a lot in the summer months and thus there is a need to grow roses in a manner that conserves precious moisture and keeps the soil in which the roses are planted moist and cool. A good layer of mulch does just that.

Irrigation

Water roses deeply and only once or twice a week.

Drip irrigation covered with a layer of mulch such as wood chips is ideal in the Okanagan Valley

If hand watering, try not to wet the foliage.

If hand watering, water under the drip line and water deeply.

Organic Rose Care Process

Early In the spring, late March or early April, we pull the remains of the existing mulch back from the plants.

We then add a generous layer of good compost, or well-rotted manure under the drip line of each plant, and then refix the drip emitters over the compost.

The old mulch is then raked back over the compost.

A new layer of chips, 3 to 5 cm thick, is then added to build up the old layer of mulch which has decayed.

Even in the hot sunny Okanagan, wood chips break down to a noticeable degree, and decay over the course of the year. This is indicative of the fact, that the soil is healthy, and that the wood is being converted to compost by the weather and the organisms and plant roots in the soil.

This natural process contributes to the health and richness of the soil.

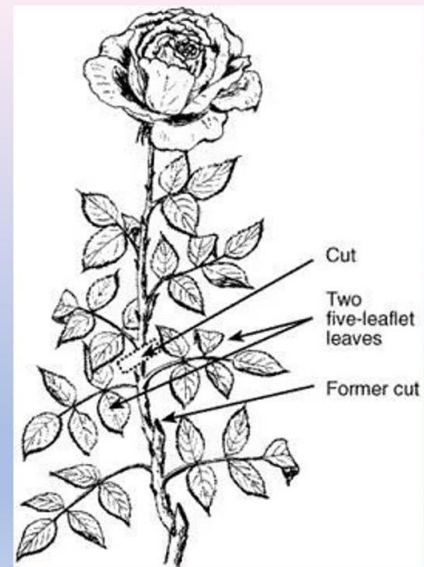
Deadheading Roses

Why deadhead roses –

Causes repeat blooming roses to put on new flower buds

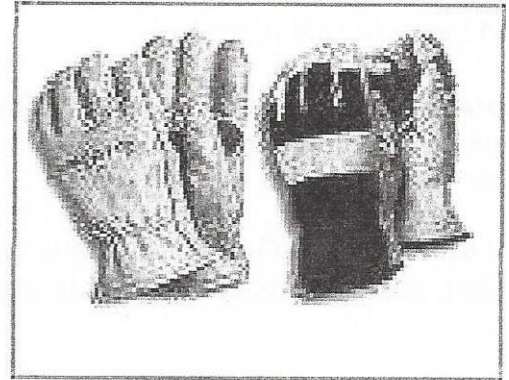
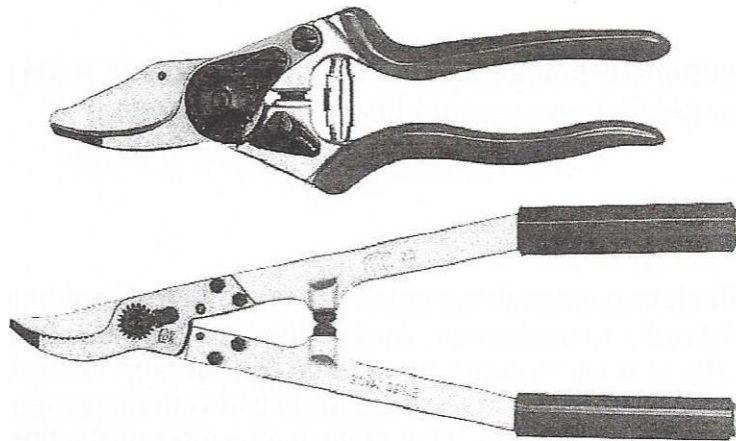
Keeps the plants looking tidy

How – cut back to above a five leaf axil



Pruning Roses

Useful Tools



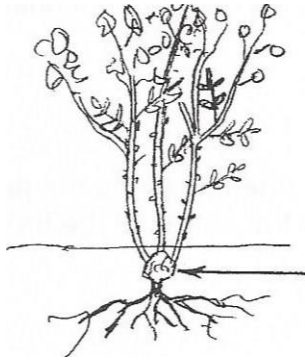
Hand Pruners Loppers and Glove

Proper pruning must be done to get the maximum enjoyment and satisfaction from roses in the garden. I separate roses into three groups for pruning.

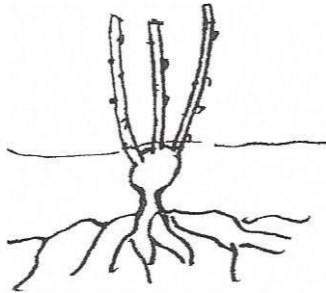
1. Roses that should be pruned hard each spring.
2. Roses that are pruned like flowering shrubs.
3. Climbing and Rambling Roses.

Roses that are pruned hard each spring include Hybrid T's, Grandiflora's, Floribundas, miniatures and some of the landscape roses. All these types of roses produce blooms on the new wood so pruning hard takes nothing away from the amount of bloom the plant produces. Renewal of new wood each year is important and pruning hard stimulates new canes from the base of the plant. The drawings below show how these roses should be pruned and how the rose is affected if not pruned hard each spring.

Best Pruning Height for the big three



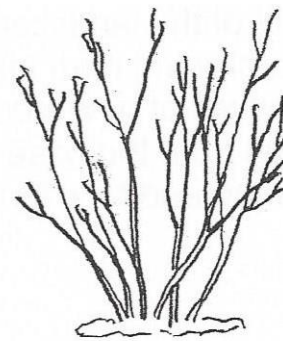
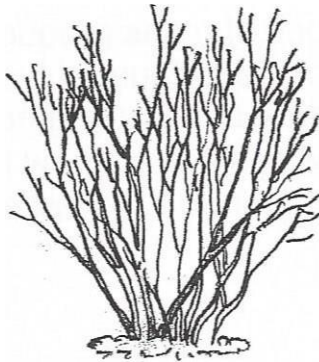
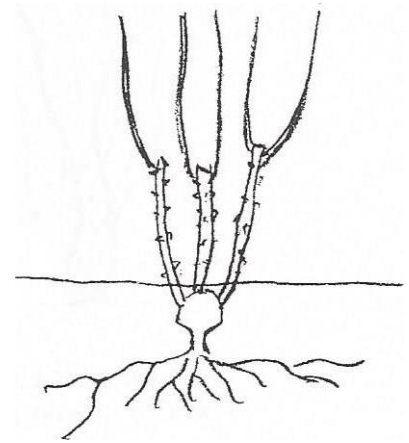
The drawing to the left illustrates a rose bush before spring pruning



Pruning the rose bush at about 30 cm (12-14")

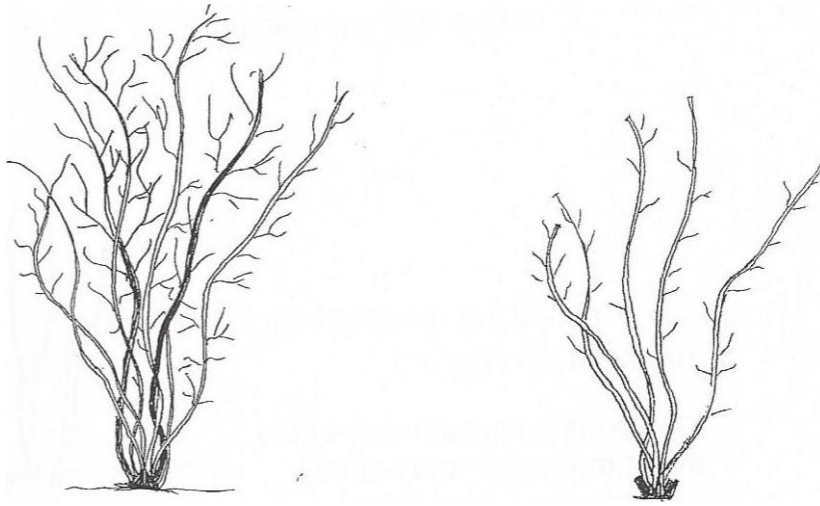
The resulting growth only at the top of the canes and nothing from the base for renewal.

Roses that are pruned like flowering shrubs are those which bloom on slightly older wood. These include some of the Rugosa varieties, some Old Garden Roses and English Roses.



As shown with the above illustration the shrub rose at the left has been thinned out until it looks like the one at the right.

Climbing Roses: I often describe the pruning of these as thinning out the very old wood and head back the plant to the shape of the trellis. See the drawing below.



Climbing Rose Climbing Rose before pruning after pruning

Pruning Times and techniques Based on the Type

Hybrid Teas bloom on new wood. Prune while dormant in late winter or early spring, before new growth begins, or just as buds start to swell. Some popular hybrid tea roses include 'Fragrant Cloud', 'Double Delight', 'John F. Kennedy', 'Peace', 'Chicago Peace', 'Tiffany', 'Color Magic', 'Dainty Bess', 'First Prize', 'Garden Party', 'Granada', 'Miss All-American Beauty', 'Mister Lincoln', 'Olympiad', 'Pristine', 'Touch of Class', and 'Tropicana'.

Grandifloras bloom on new wood. Prune while dormant in late winter/early spring before new growth begins or just as buds begin to swell. Some popular grandifloras include 'Gold Medal', 'Love', 'Queen Elizabeth', 'Sonia', 'Tournament of Roses', 'Crimson Bouquet', 'Fragrant Plum', 'Glowing Peace' and 'Octoberfestl'.

Floribundas bloom on new wood. Prune while dormant in late winter/early spring before new growth begins or just as buds begin to swell. Some popular floribundas include 'Angel Face', 'Betty Prior', 'Cherish', 'Europeana †', 'French Lace', 'Gene Boerner'r 'Sexy Rexy', 'Simplicity', 'Sun Flare', 'Betty Boop', 'Bill Warriner' and 'Sunsprite'.

Climbing roses - Climbers and ramblers are sometimes grouped together but they are decidedly different. Large-flowered climbers bloom repeatedly while most

ramblers are once blooming. If your climber blooms on old wood, prune it after the first flush of bloom

If your climber blooms on new wood, prune in early spring as buds begin to swell. Train canes horizontally (as along a fence) to encourage lateral growth for more profuse bloom. Cut back lateral growth to 3-6 inches. You can also peg the tips to the ground to encourage lateral growth.

Ramblers – Most Ramblers bloom on year-old wood, so they should be pruned after bloom. Remove dead and diseased wood at any time, but save major pruning for after the flowers fade, usually late summer or early fall. Then remove flowering canes at their point of origin, leaving only the new canes that will form next year's flowers.

Miniatures bloom on new wood. Prune while dormant in late winter/early spring before new growth begins or just as buds begin to swell. Some popular miniature roses include 'Beauty Secret', 'Cupcake', 'Debut', 'Jeanne Lajoie', 'Party Girl', 'Peaches 'N' Cream', 'Puppy Love', 'Starina', 'Baby Love', 'Fiesty', 'Popcorn', 'Gourmet Popcorn', 'Small Miracle', 'Starla', 'Sun Sprinkles' and 'Tropical Twist'.

Polyanthas - If your polyantha hasn't suffered from winter damage, let shape, size and condition be your guide, prune in early spring if they are overgrown. They look best as bushy plants. Popular polyanthas are 'Cecile Brunner', 'China Doll', 'Margo Koster' and 'The Fairy'.

Old Garden Roses (once-blooming) - These may not need pruning every year. Shape, size and the general condition of the plant should be your guide. If you must do major pruning, do it after the flowers fade, cutting out oldest wood and lightly thinning the plant. This group includes albas, gallicas, centifolias, damasks, and once-blooming mosses.

Old Garden Roses (repeat blooming) - Again, let shape, size and condition be your guide, allow the plant to mature before pruning. If it needs pruning, do so in early spring, much the same as for modern roses. This group includes bourbans, Chinas, hybrid musks, hybrid perpetuals, repeat-blooming moss roses, noisettes, repeat-blooming damasks and repeat-blooming Portlands.

Shrub roses (species roses and hybrids) - Allow these 2-3 years to mature before pruning, removing only dead and diseased wood. Prune after flowering only for size and shape, usually no more than by 1/3.

English roses - If your garden is small and you wish to have a small plant with fewer but larger blossoms, prune like a hybrid tea. If your garden is large and you wish to have a large plant with more but smaller blossoms, prune lightly as you would a shrub rose.

Pest and disease management for Roses

The common insects are:

Aphids- Probably the most common pest of rose bushes in the Okanagan and the most noticeable when there is a heavy infestation. I find late Dormant Oil / Lime Sulphur treatments (late March) gives good control for the first wave of Aphids. You can also strip them off by hand, or use a strong stream of spray from a hose to knock them down. After that, the Beneficial's such as lady beetles , lace wings and Syrphid Flies generally keep the aphids to a minimum. Plant lots of alyssum in the rose garden to attract the Beneficial's. If spraying is deemed necessary the use something mild like Safer Soap.

Rose Curculio – These pests are a small weevle, they like to chew flower petals and then lay their eggs. The pupae fall to the ground and develop in the soil. They are particularly fond of yellow coloured roses and often pick favorites. We use nematodes as a long term environmentally friendly control at the Summerland Ornamental Gardens. Nematodes applied in spring under proper temperature and moisture conditions will work well and often last for years if they become established.

Leaf Hoppers- Often confused with white fly leafhoppers can be quite nasty and difficult to control. They cause the foliage to become mottled and quite unsightly. The dormant sprays are effective in late March as well as a couple of June applications of permethrin or pyrethrin. Look for sprays containing these active ingredients.

White Fly – Similar to but smaller than leafhoppers and most often seen in June as the weather warms. They often fly up in a cloud when disturbed. I use Safer Insecticidal Soap mixed with Neem Oil sprayed on the underside of the leaves when these little pests show up. They eat holes in the leaves and can cause quiet unsightly damage.

Leaf Rollers —Leaf rollers can be picked off the rose bush easily. If further control is needed spray before the leaves are rolled up with BT.

Thrips- A real challenge if they get a foothold in the garden. Thrips can be managed with a product called Borer Spray (active ingredient Endosulphan) applied before the flower buds open. If you wish not to use this chemical control then utmost sanitation is required including the removal of all leaves prior to winter and a heavy pruning in the spring and removing the prunings from the property. A heavy layer (3") of Natures Gold or other well composted mulch on the rose bed will prevent

overwintering thrips from emerging in spring. Flooding the soil below the plants during peak infestations can drown the pupae.

Spider Mite — Not usually a problem if good cultural practices are followed. Dormant sprays generally provide effective control as needed.

Spittlebug — Generally not worth worrying about as they can be washed off with water quite easily and other than looking a bit unsightly they do very little damage.

The Common Diseases are:

Mildew - White powdery material growing on leaves and buds causing deformation of the foliage and stunting the bloom.

Control — Prevention is the best way to deal with mildew but when severe infections occur, cut back the plant to 6-8 inches. Destroy all debris. Spray once every 10 days as new growth appears with copper spray or sulphur.

Prevention — Spray when winter cover is removed or just as the buds are breaking in early spring with Lime Sulphur/Dormant Oil combo. Spray with copper spray, or sulphur every 2 to 3 weeks starting when there is 6 inches of new growth. Focus your attention on June and August as these are the months (warm days-cool nights) mildew really takes off. Recent studies are showing that a good composted mulch applied to the root zone of the rose bush will actually minimize mildew problems.

Alternative Control — Dissolve 2 tbs. Or more Epsom Salts (Magnesium Sulphate) in 1 Gal. Water. Spray the foliage every 2 weeks throughout the growing season or as needed. This material is somewhat effective in controlling Aphids as well.

Black Spot - As the name implies, black spots appear on leaves. The affected leaves turn yellow and some will fall off. Generally in the Okanagan black spot is not all that common or troublesome. In moister or more humid climates, this is the biggest disease problem for rose gardeners.. It is more of a problem here, when overhead watering is used.

CONTROL- Use the dormant oil/lime sulphur combination in March. Follow up twice a month with, Copper spray.

NON CHEMICAL CONTROL — If possible use drip or trench irrigation, keeping moisture off the foliage. Wettable garden sulphur applied to the foliage at label rates gives effective control if repeated at least once a week.

Winter Protection for Roses —

Roses that have been maintained in a healthy fashion and are protected properly for winter will give many years of enjoyment. Even though some Okanagan winters are mild enough that roses need no covering for winter, it is good insurance that we cover every year to protect our investment when we get a cold one (usually 3 out of 5 years).

WHEN TO COVER AND WHEN TO REMOVE - wait until after the first frosty weather (usually in November) before covering your rosebushes. Remove the covering by mid to Late March. Prune out diseased and broken branches but don't prune back hard until spring.

WHAT TO COVER WITH AND HOW MUCH — Use a mixture of garden soil and peat moss, wood chips, Natures Gold, or leaves. Roses need about 25 — 30 cm of covering (10 — 12"). Work the material into the canes so there is complete coverage. A collar made from cardboard or plywood is helpful in containing the covering material.

NOTE — It is a good cultural practice to spray your roses with fixed copper at label rates before the leaves drop.

Keeping Cut Roses Fresh

IF YOU RECEIVE YOUR ROSES IN A VASE OR ARRANGEMENT FROM YOUR FLORIST:

Be sure that your roses do not run out of preservative solution in their vase. Check daily, and add preservative solution to keep the vase full. Any floral foam used must be kept submerged by adding preservative solution. To make preservative solution, mix the contents of a flower preservative packet with tap water or distilled water according to the directions on the package. Avoid using water from a home or commercial water softener.

IF YOU RECEIVE YOUR ROSES IN A BOX OR WRAPPED, OUT OF WATER:

Prepare a clean vase full of flower preservative solution, mixed accurately according to the directions on the package. Mix with tap or distilled water, but avoid using water from a home or commercial water softener. If you are using floral foam in your vase, before placing the foam in the vase, saturate it in the preservative solution by allowing it to sink of its own weight in a container of the solution. When placing the foam in the vase, be sure it is fully submerged in the preservative solution.

Remove any foliage that will be under water after the roses are arranged.

While holding the stems under water in a sink or under running water, cut about an inch off each stem with a sharp knife or shears. Immediately place the rose in the vase of preservative solution.

After arranging, if possible, place the arrangement in a cool, dark room or a refrigerator for 2-3 hours (but do not allow them to freeze).

When picking a place to display your roses, choose a cool spot that is out of the sun and out of any drafts, and away from any heat sources.

As with roses received in a vase, check the container daily and add preservative solution as needed to keep the vase full and any floral foam submerged.

TO HELP ELIMINATE AIR TRAPPED IN THE STEMS AND TO IMPROVE PRESERVATIVE SOLUTION UPTAKE, CUT ROSE STEMS UNDER WATER.

IF A ROSE SHOULD WILT PREMATURELY:

Premature wilting (within a day or two of receiving or arranging) may indicate air trapped in the stem that is preventing preservative solution from moving up to the flower. Also, there may be a cut or scrape in the back above the water level. To revive the rose, re-cut the stem an inch or so from the bottom or above any damaged area of the stem, and then submerge the entire rose in a basin or shallow pan of warm water (about 100 degrees Fahrenheit). Be sure the stem is straightened out and that the end of the stem stays submerged. It will usually revive within an hour or so and can be replaced in the arrangement.

Preserving Cut Roses

The easiest method is air-drying. Roses can be dried individually or in small bunches. Remove leaves from stems and make sure that they are bunched loosely and that there is enough air circulating throughout the bunch. Hang the rose bunches upside down in a dark, dry, warm room. When the stems are dry and rigid (which should take about one to two weeks), the flowers are ready to be stored or used.

Another method to dry your roses is to press them. Weight pressing is a simple way to preserve individual or small bunches of roses. Simply place roses (whole buds or just the petals) between the pages of a heavy book. You may want to line the pages with wax paper, so as to preserve the book. Close the book and place something heavy on top. After two or three weeks, the flowers will be ready to be stored or used.

Once your roses are dried, they can be used in a myriad of ways. Whether you simply use the petals as potpourri, or you use the full blooms to create an elegant arrangement, your Valentine's Day roses will last for the remainder of the year. For an elegant look, place your roses, along with some floral accents, between two panes of clear glass and frame them. Flowers such as statice, strawflowers, larkspur, delphinium, safflower, baby's breath and mimosa are also ideal for drying and will make beautiful accents to dried roses.

Addendum - Winter Rose Hardiness, Summerland Ornamental Gardens 2023/24

The winter of 2023/24 was one of extreme climate variables and temperature fluctuations. Climate change is increasingly disrupting the east west flow of the jet stream and causing it to meander north and south in a wave pattern of alternating high and low-pressure regions. This in turn, along with occasional blocking patterns allows increasingly intense outbreaks of “polar vortex” cold snaps.

The weather in both November and December 2023 was warmer than normal with high temperatures above freezing every day in December, and this trend continued through the first part of January. While most roses in the Summerland Ornamental Gardens were hardened off, they were not necessarily fully dormant. The recorded high temperature on the morning of January 10th in Summerland, was 1 C and then the temperature began to drop rapidly. By 9:00 PM on the evening of January 11th it was -20C, and by the 11:00 PM on January 12th, it was – 26.2 C, a drop of 27 degrees Celsius in less than 48 hours.

The official plant hardiness zone for both Summerland and Penticton is on the border of 6b and 7a with normal coldest winter temperatures of approximately -19C. The low temperature on January 12th is at the low end of zone 5a. Few roses, other than Rugosa Hybrids, Old Garden Roses and hardy Canadian Bred Roses are able to tolerate that temperature without serious freeze damage, or even winter kill for many Floribunda and Hybrid Tea varieties. In addition, there were two other factors at play during this polar outbreak event. As stated above, the roses were not completely hardened off as would be the norm in the Okanagan Valley in January, and the outbreak of arctic air was accompanied by winds out of the north with gusts between 40 and 60 kms per hour on January 12th.

The winter of 2022/23 also had a less severe arctic outbreak in late December with temperatures as low as -23 C between December 18th and 24th. During this period as well, there were winds of 30 to 35 kms per hour during the cold spell. This too led to severe winter damage on many of the rose plants in our collection, particularly the Hybrid Tea and Floribunda varieties. These all required very hard pruning, to the ground in some cases. This led us to mound the less hardy varieties with wood chips this past fall in order to protect more cane in the event of another cold snap.

OBSERVATIONS

All of these abnormal weather events together led to severe winter damage to roses and other plant material such as grapes, cherries peaches and other plants that are not hardy at these temperatures. This past winter, the event was extreme enough to even do damage to many of our English Roses, and even to some of our Canadian bred hardy roses. The observed damage was a bit shocking, though not severe enough to cause excessive damage that could not be dealt with a harder selective pruning.

In assessing my own roses and visiting other rose gardens nearby, it became apparent that many of the same rose varieties that we grow had differing degrees of damage

due to microclimate, even though the extreme lows were the same. Cold dry wind and desiccation are as big a factor in damage to roses as the record cold temperatures. Two fellow gardeners and volunteers at the Summerland gardens live within a kilometer of my home. One gardens on an exposed bench above the Skaha Lake, the other in a very protected gully that is sheltered even in severe wind events. My own home is on an exposed knoll and very exposed to wind. My own roses were severely damaged, and I was forced to cut them back hard, three plants to the ground. I am not certain how well they will grow back. The same can be said of the gardener on the lake bench. She lost several Hybrid Tea plants, including a Peace Rose that had been in the same location for decades. The gardener in the sheltered location had little damage to her roses, most of which are young plants of David Austin English rose varieties.

The rose collections at the Summerland Ornamental Gardens consist mainly of hardy shrub roses, including many Canadian bred hardy modern roses, Old Garden Rose Varieties, Hybrid Rugosa varieties and species roses. Damage was most serious in the Hybrid Tea and Floribunda varieties that we grow, as would be expected. These had to be pruned back to below the level of the mounding. The English Rose varieties, as well as some of the other modern shrub roses had varying amounts of freeze damage requiring harder pruning than would be the norm in our zone 6b hardiness zone. Most of the Canadian bred roses had superficial to no winter damage. The Rugosa Hybrids, Old Garden Rose varieties and species roses we grow had no damage, none!

Both the City of Penticton and the Town of Oliver have rose gardens. These gardens are both largely planted with Hybrid Tea and Floribunda varieties. Many of the plants in both gardens are old plants. The Penticton Garden contains more than 200 roses. The plants there are mounded each winter to a depth of approximately 25 cm (12 in.).

Inspection of that garden this first week of April revealed that the plants all survived the winter and were budding out, though they were all pruned back to 12 cm or less, which is considerably shorter than would be the case in a normal year. The rose garden at Oliver was also mounded, but not nearly as heavily. Inspection showed that approximately 50% of the roses were dead and will have to be replaced. These plants again were old plants that have survived winters for a decade or more.

There are small collections of David Austin English Roses in both gardens, these plants all survived the cold winter in much better condition than their more tender neighbors. The English Roses in Penticton were not mounded and survived the winter in situ, as did shrub and landscape roses planted as accent plants in the border around the perimeter.

DISCUSSION

Modern rose varieties have been bred for the repeat flowering trait. This has meant using primarily repeat blooming species roses such as *Rosa Chinensis*, *Rosa rugosa*, *Rosa Bracteata*, etc. as well as early Tea and Hybrid Tea roses as genetic stock to breed this trait into these varieties. With the exception of *Rosa rugosa*, most repeat blooming roses are native to the sub-tropics. This means in general; they cannot survive sub-freezing temperatures. Thus, many repeat blooming roses in the Hybrid

Tea and Floribunda classes are not cane hardy in temperatures much below -15 C. Hence the increased winter damage to these types of roses during extreme winter events such as those of the past two winters.

Many of the rose varieties in the Summerland Ornamental Gardens collections, while repeat blooming, also have genetics from hardier rose species close-up in their breeding. There has been and indeed still is a Canadian rose hybridizing tradition of combining the repeat blooming trait with excellent cold hardiness. David Austin English roses are also for the most part, significantly hardier than Hybrid Tea varieties due to the Old Garden Rose genetics close-up in the breeding of many of them. Many English Roses are cane hardy to -20 C or so and some to colder temperatures.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With climate change and increasing incidents of arctic outbreaks in winter, what can rose growers do to protect plants through these events? There are several options:

Hybrid Tea, Floribunda and other tender varieties can still be grown. But do not believe the zone 5 hardiness ratings on the tags when you look to purchase these types of roses. Most are hardy to zone 6a at best, some only to zone 7. You can grow these varieties if they are planted in a sheltered location, well mounded in the fall, and planted with the graft or bud union 5 to 10 cm, (2 to 4 inches) below the soil grade. You must also accept that it is possible that you will lose some plants in the event of future severe winter weather events.

Grow hardier shrub rose varieties such as English Roses, Canadian bred hardy roses, or hardier varieties of shrub roses. Do some research on rose hardiness online on a site such as Help Me Find Roses when looking for roses you might wish to plant. Speak with rose growers in your area and ask for advice or seek out a rose society in your area. Many rose societies have web sites with information on cultivars that do well in their climate.

Grow Old Garden Roses, or Rugosa Hybrids that are iron clad hardy and proven over decades or even centuries to be hardy and beautiful garden plants. Many of these, you will have to seek out to buy from specialty online nurseries such as Fraser Valley Rose Farm in B. C., Cornhill Nursery in New Brunswick, or for those of you in the US, American suppliers such as High Country Roses, Northland Rosarium, or Freedom Gardens. These are all specialty nurseries that grow and sell many of the hardier rose varieties, including English Roses.

Below are two images of hardy English Roses, post pruning, as a visual example of how these roses fared over this past winter. The top image is The Mary Rose, the bottom one is The Pilgrim. I hope this discussion is of use to those of you who read it.

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