

Growing Roses Successfully



Although roses have a reputation for being difficult to grow, cultivating them in your garden can be very rewarding. And the good news is, roses are not very difficult to grow after all!

Plant Selection

Selecting the correct rose to grow in your garden is the single most important factor for having successful rose cultivation. While many gardeners love the unique coloring of hybrid roses, they are not hardy in the upper Midwest, making them harder to successfully overwinter. This can cause unnecessary stress when growing roses. Instead of hybrid roses, we suggest planting own-root shrub roses. These plants are not grafted onto a rootstock. Also, only look for roses that are hardy to your zone to eliminate overwintering stress. Some of our favorite varieties are 'Winnipeg Parks', *Easy Elegance* 'High Voltage', *Easy Elegance* 'Como Park', and *Easy Elegance* 'Coral Cove'.

Planting

Roses require a minimum of 6 hours of direct sunlight and well-drained, organic matter-rich soil. Roses can become susceptible to disease, so plant them in an area with good airflow and proper spacing.

After selecting the location, dig your hole 2 times wider than root ball and the same depth. Incorporate cotton burr compost into the hole and the soil around it for extra organic matter. Place the plant in the hole and add 2 Agriform fertilizer tablets in the hole, ensuring they do not touch the roots. Backfill the hole, compacting the soil gently to eliminate air pockets.

Water the plant so that the root zone has sufficient water. Roses prefer even moisture, so watering on a regular basis will be necessary.



Rose Care

Shrub roses can be very easy plants to care for. After the first year of growth, fertilizer applications should start after leaf buds have started growing (typically mid-May), and again in late June. We suggest using *Fertilome Systemic Rose Food*.

Any pruning to shape your plant should be done in the spring. You can prune up to 1/3 of the plant for shaping and size control. During the season, deadheading after blooms is beneficial to reduce rose hip production and promote stronger rebloom. When deadheading, trimming back to the third set of leaflets is the rule of thumb for best rebloom.

The great thing about hardy roses is overwintering is an easy process. Do not fertilize after July to prevent aggressive new growth. Forgo deadheading after September to give your stems a chance to harden off and form rose hips. If the season has been dry, watering them well through the fall will give the roots much-needed moisture to overwinter. Protect the root and crown area with a layer of mulch or straw.

If there is dieback in the spring from winter, simply prune off the dead and shape. The plant will come back beautifully.

