



## ROSE CARE

### WATERING AND FERTILIZING

Roses need about one inch of water per week during the growing season. If rainfall isn't sufficient, supplementary watering is beneficial. If possible, use soaker hoses to keep the foliage dry and help prevent disease. If you must water overhead, do so in the morning so that the foliage will be dry by nightfall.

Roses benefit from fertilization. Organic or inorganic; general purpose or specific to roses; it doesn't really matter to the rose. Work fertilizer in lightly, starting about 6 inches from the crown, spreading out to 18 inches, then water. Make a repeat application around the middle of June. Continuous-flowering roses benefit from a third application around the middle of July. Some gardeners prefer to make one application of a slow release fertilizer in May.

### PRUNING

Most rose pruning is done in the spring at about the time forsythia is blooming. Remove any dead, diseased or weak canes, and then prune to open up the center of the plant and form a pleasing shape. Cut at a 45° angle just above an outward-facing bud, slanting away from the bud. Next remove any crossing branches or sucker growth. Finally, prune to shape the plant. Prune *hybrid teas, grandifloras and floribundas* to one to two feet tall, leaving only about larger canes (1/2" or more in diameter). *Shrub and species roses* should be pruned much more lightly. Remove no more than 1/3 of the growth. After pruning, it is a good idea to seal all cut ends with a waterproof wood glue to prevent cane borers from entering the cut stems.

Rambling and climbing roses generally need pruning only once every three to four years. At this time, remove twiggy growth and old canes, leaving young, vigorous growth to train onto or through the support structure.

### DEADHEADING

For most types of roses, deadhead faded flowers to an outward-facing bud above a five or seven-leaflet leaf. For rugosa or shrub roses where rose hips are desired, simply clean the faded flowers, leaving the hips. Do not deadhead or prune roses after October 1<sup>st</sup>. This will help the plant to harden off before winter.

## **WINTER PROTECTION**

Keep roses healthy by planting them in well-drained soil in a site where they will receive at least six hours of sunlight. Water and fertilize regularly during the growing season but do not fertilize after August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Don't provide winter protection too early—wait for a hard killing frost or two. At that time, pile up loose bark mulch over more sensitive roses (hybrid tea, floribunda) to a depth of about 10 to 12 inches. If desired, a collar of chicken wire or hardware cloth can be made to hold the mulch in place. Rugosa, shrub and species type roses do not generally need this kind of winter protection. We do not recommend using rose cones.