

BASIC ROSE CARE

UNLOCKING THE SECRET OF ROSE CARE

BEGINNER BASICS:

RIGHT SPOT: Plant in a spot that gets at least **6-8 hours of sun**, does not have competition from tree roots, has good drainage and good ventilation. Do not to crowd your roses. For most hybrid teas, the plant centers should be 4 feet apart. (The wider the rose grows the further apart it should be from other roses.)

WHICH ROSES: Start off with about only one-half the number you think you would like. Next year, you can add more after you can find out what you prefer. Besides, every year new roses are introduced. (Newer roses generally have better disease resistance).

Buy from a local nursery. Only buy bushes for which you have the right spot.

PLANTING: Dig a reasonable sized hole for your plant and use an organic planting mix combined with the original soil to back fill your roses.

MAINTENANCE: *Water is the most important ingredient.* An automatic system is the best way to deliver water since it provides water on a regular schedule so plants don't get stressed (feast or famine –neither is good). If you do nothing else, give roses plenty of water. Thorough, deep watering is important. Never give light surface waterings. What's enough? The soil around the roots should always be damp but never saturated with standing water. Check the moisture at the drip line (edge of the leaf canopy), add water when the soil is dry in the upper 1 to 2 inches.

Add 2-3 inches of mulch to conserve water and keep weeds at bay. An added benefit, as mulch decomposes it slowly adds food to your soil which then can be used by your roses.

Add organic fertilizers twice a year—once late February and then again in early August. This fosters a healthy environment that produces plants that are stronger and better able to resist disease and insects.

Most rosarians have a no spray garden. Combating fungus is as easy as not crowding your roses and picking up and tossing pruning debris in the trash can. If there is a wet spring, expect roses to have some disease. Don't worry, those diseases will disappear with our dry summers. Just pick up diseased leaves and toss in the trash.

For insect control, let Mother Nature do her thing. The garden naturally achieves a balance between the beneficial insects and the pests. Expect to see some pests. While you are waiting for the beneficial insect population to build up, use a hose to wash off aphids and spider mites. Roses love a shower!

Winter **pruning** is done to cut back and shape the bush, eliminate dead, diseased or damaged canes, encourage growth of new canes and to open the center of the bush.

It is as easy as that. Now go have some fun in the garden!



*Want to learn more? Consider joining a local rose society to get information filled newsletters for only \$20
Contact Charlotte at owendyk@gmail.com for details.*