

Wm. Wheat & Son

THE FLOWER & GARDEN CENTRE

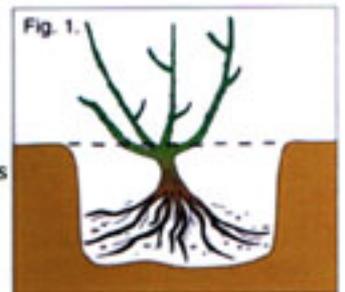
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Gardeners Guide to:

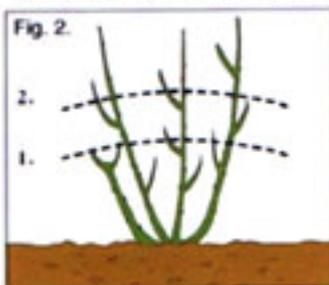
ROSE CULTIVATION

Roses like sun - choose a site with at least a few hours sun each day and where the roots of the rose will not be in excessive competition with the roots of other plants, especially trees. The exception is the ramblers which can grow well by trees. Roses appreciate a humus- rich soil, ideally with a pH of 6.5 but will cope well with soils either side of this ideal. The addition of generous quantities of well rotted manure or compost both before planting and as a mulch each spring will make almost any soil suitable. Plant as soon as possible after purchase, never allowing the roots to dry out. When planted the base of the stems should be about 3" (7.5cm) below ground level (Fig 1). In a formal bedding scheme 18" (50cm) is the ideal planting distance for Hybrid Teas, Floribundas and the more compact English Roses. This will give a good, full bed. In a rose border, planting in groups of 3 or more looks most effective giving the effect of one large bush. Roses are superb as hedges. Depending on the size and variety and the speed you want it to fill out, 18" to 3' (50cm - 1m) between plants is recommended.



All roses, especially the repeat flowering varieties, greatly appreciate the application of fertilizer. Bio Toprose Fertilizer can be applied to all roses at the start of the growing season (March or April in the UK) and again about six weeks later. Roses particularly appreciate a moist and cool root run which is easily attainable by generous mulching and occasional deep waterings. This is particularly important in hot, dry summers where the waterings should be frequent enough to keep the soil moist at all times. Dead head the flowers as they die, not only to keep the plant looking good, but also to encourage speedy repeat flowering. With a variety that produces many flowers in a cluster, each bloom can easily be snapped off and when the last bloom has died cut the stem back to the first full sized leaf. Alternatively, 12" (30cm) or more of the stem can be removed if you want to restrict the size of the plant during the growing season. If the variety normally produces attractive hips then the flowers should not be removed.

January and February is the best time to prune. After very cold winters pruning should be delayed until spring growth is just starting. Firstly remove any dead, diseased or very weak growth from the plant. Any stems that have become very old and woody and that are not producing vigorous new stems should also be removed. Repeat flowering bush/ shrub roses should be cut down by between 1/3 and 2/3 (Fig 2). Non-repeating shrubs should be left alone or lightly pruned by no more than 1/3. Climbers - the previous year's flowering shoots should be reduced to 3 or 4 buds or about 6" (15cms).



Ramblers should be left to ramble at will unless they need to be constrained, in which case treat them as climbers. The Hybrid Teas and Floribundas have generally rather neat, upright growth in the 2ft to 4ft (60cm- 120cm) range that is best suited to the more formal areas of the garden. The great majority of English Roses, Old Roses, Shrub Roses and Wild Roses are more informal and often grow taller, between 3ft and 6ft (90cm- 180cm). However, judicious pruning can alter the size substantially. The climbers tend to have larger flowers and stiffer, shorter growth than ramblers and generally repeat flower. As a rule, the ramblers will grow more successfully in difficult situations.

Roses associate beautifully with herbaceous plants although care has to be taken with the more vigorous varieties as they can easily swamp the roses. The English Roses are ideal as they repeat flower. Ramblers are the best for growing into trees or covering garages, sheds etc. and (the rather less vigorous varieties) for pergolas. Although, they only flower once they can be used as support for other climbers such as clematis or honeysuckle. The climbers are variable in height and the taller varieties can end up as 6ft. of bare stems with all the flowers and leaves at the top and out of reach. Roses are one of the most fragrant groups of all plants. Most groups have at least some varieties that are scented, but the best are the English Roses, the Old Roses (both summer and repeat), the Hybrid Musks and the ramblers.