



The Shady Hill Gardening Tips Series

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ROSES – Tips for Growing and Maintaining

Roses like lots of sun, at least 4 to 6 hours a day.

Roses need lots of water, even established ones. It is important to water established roses deeply at least once a week with an inch or more of water. Newly planted roses should be watered daily, as needed, to prevent wilting.

Roses need good drainage and don't like boggy conditions or "wet feet".

Roses like to be fertilized.

Most roses are fairly susceptible to disease and insects and have to be watched closely. At the first sign of disease or insect, it is important to treat as quickly as possible. Some common diseases and pests of roses include black spot, powdery mildew, aphids, and caterpillars.

The best way to avoid black spot and mildew is to try and keep the leaves of the plant as dry as possible, ie, when watering, water at the base and try not to let water splash on the lower leaves.

If your rose develops black spot or mildew, clean up any fallen leaves and remove any diseased leaves from the plant to prevent the disease from spreading. You can then treat the plant with a fungicide.

Aphids are tiny, tiny green insects and reproduce very quickly. They tend to form on the undersides of the foliage first, then if the infestation is large enough, they can completely engulf the stems. They can be combated with lady bugs, a natural predator, or an all purpose insecticide.

When pruning, keep in mind the overall goal is to promote new growth and allow light to penetrate.

Pruning of climbing or pillar roses really depends on the growth habit of the variety. In general, you can prune any "prolific" canes after they flower. For climbers where new canes are not numerous, you can remove older, less vigorous canes.

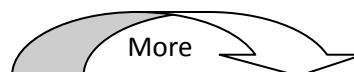
Most other types of roses can be pruned in the spring. You should remove all winter-killed canes and cut out any weak or spindly canes, provided you are able to leave a couple of vigorous canes. You can also prune back canes to a point below which no winter kill injury is evident.



Black Spot on rose leaf



Powdery Mildew on Rose



When pruning, be sure to use a good pair of sharp, by-pass pruners and cut at a 45° angle.

During the spring and summer, you should "deadhead" by immediately removing passed blossoms, but no major pruning is necessary. When deadheading, you want to cut the flower stem back to the first outward facing bud above a five-leaflet leaf.

You do not want to do any deadheading, however, any later than October. So if you there are dead flowers on the canes as winter approaches, simply leave them. This will help the plant harden off over the winter and be less susceptible to winter injury.

You should also mound your rose with about 8" to 12" of earth or mulch before winter for protection, and you can cut any long canes at that time to keep them from whipping in the wind.

Experience is usually the best indicator of how much winter kill you can expect to find the next spring, and you can use that to prune accordingly during the late summer and early fall after the plant has finished blooming to cut down on winter kill the next year.