

Andy's Garden



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Pruning Roses

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When to Prune Roses

Timing is determined by the class of the rose plant and the zone in which it is growing. Most rose pruning is done in the spring, with the blooming of the forsythia as a signal to get moving. If you don't have forsythia, watch for when the leaf buds begin to swell on your rose plants, meaning the bumps on the canes get larger and reddish in color.

Hybrid tea roses are the most particular about pruning. If you don't know what type of rose you have, watch the plant for a season. If it blooms on the new growth it sends out that growing season, prune while dormant or just about to break dormancy, as stated above. If it blooms early, on last year's canes, don't prune until after flowering. Some general pruning guidelines by rose classification:

BLOOMS ONCE, ON NEW GROWTH

Modern Ever-Blooming Roses & Floribunda: These bloom best on the current season's growth. Prune hard ($\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ the plant's height) in the spring and remove old woody stems. Leave 3-5 healthy canes evenly spaced around the plant. Cut them at various lengths from 18 - 24 inches, to encourage continuous blooming.

Hybrid Teas & Grandiflora: These also bloom on new wood and should be pruned in early spring. Remove dead and weak wood. Create an open vase shape with the remaining canes by removing the center stems and any branches crossing inwards. Then reduce the length of the remaining stems by about $\frac{1}{2}$ or down to 18 - 24 inches. You can allow the older, stronger stems to be a bit longer than the new growth.

BLOOMS ONCE, ON OLD WOOD

Ramblers: Prune to remove winter damage and dead wood or to shape and keep size in check. Ramblers bloom only once and can be pruned right after flowering, all the way back to 2-3 inches if you wish.

REPEAT BLOOMERS

Modern Shrub Roses: This group is repeat bloomers, blooming on mature, but not old, woody stems. Leave them unpruned to increase vigor for the first 2 years and then use the "one-third" method. Each year remove one-third of the oldest canes (in addition to any dead, diseased or dying canes).

Climbers: Climbers may repeat bloom. Prune early to remove winter damage and dead wood. Prune after flowering to shape and keep their size in check.

MINIMAL PRUNING NEEDED

Alba, Centifolia, Damasks, Gallica, and Mosses: This group blooms only once, producing flowers on old wood and don't require much pruning at all. Prune only to remove dead or thin wood and to shape the plants and prune after flowering.

Miniature Roses: Prune only to shape. Cut back to an outward facing bud after blooming.

Rose Pruning Basics

Use clean, sharp tools

Look at the overall plant, but begin pruning from the base of the plant.

Prune to open the center of the plant to light and air circulation

Make your cuts at a 45-degree angle, about 1/4 inch above a bud that is facing toward the outside of the plant.

Make sure it is a clean cut (not ragged)

Remove all broken, dead, dying or diseased wood (Any branches that look dry, shriveled or black. Cut until the inside of the cane is white.)

Remove any weak or twiggy branches thinner than a pencil

If cane borers are a problem in your area, seal the cut with a white glue, such as Elmer's.

Remove sucker growth below the graft.

Remove any remaining foliage

Making the world beautiful
One flower at a time

