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has been
reviewed by
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faculty.

Watering

Soil moisture should be maintained to a depth of 2–3 feet. The amount of water required depends on your soil's characteristics, weather conditions, and the particular microclimate in which you live. Irrigate slowly to ensure water penetrates through the entire root zone. This is important not only to supply moisture to the root system, but also to leach—or carry—salts beyond the root zone.

Roses require more frequent watering than most other landscape plants. During the cool winter months, water roses once a week or when needed. In spring and fall, loam soils are usually irrigated two to three times per week. During the summer heat you will probably need to water three or four times per week. You may have to water every day, depending on your soil and weather conditions. (Clay soil retains more moisture than sandy soil. Loam soil is between clay and sand.)

Container roses need to be watered two or three times per week during cool weather and as much as once a day in warm temperatures. Watch them carefully in the summer for signs of stress, such as wilting or yellow leaves.

Cultivating

The principal reason for cultivation is to keep grasses and weeds from invading the rose beds. If your rose bed is not too large, you can pull weeds by hand. Or cut weeds by shallow scraping of the soil so as not to disturb the rose's feeder roots developing and functioning near the surface. Shallower feeder roots are especially abundant if a mulch has been used. Avoid spading the bed as it will cut large numbers of feeder roots.

Mulching materials such as compost, forest mulch, straw, or wood chips should be applied throughout the year. Layer 3–4 inches around each bush. Mulch helps to reduce weeds, retains soil moisture, and keeps roots cool. It also builds a healthy soil structure as it decomposes over time.

Fertilizing

Roses are heavy “feeders” that need to be supplied with nitrogen and phosphorous. It is better to apply small amounts of a slow-release fertilizer every six weeks during the growing season, rather than a heavy application once a year. The first application of slow-release fertilizer should be applied after the roses have been pruned in January or February and repeated every six weeks until June. For Old Garden Roses that aren't pruned until after blooming, start fertilizing in January or February anyway to promote flowers. This is usually sufficient for most roses in a home landscape situation.

However, gardeners who compete in rose shows often supplement the above regimen with a liquid fertilizer every week or two during the same months. Liquid rose fertilizers, which are readily available to the plant, can be applied to the soil or sprayed directly on the foliage. **A note of caution:** foliar feedings are practiced only during the relatively cooler weather of March–April and late September–October when the roses are in peak bloom periods. Apply early in the day before the sun heats up. Test a few leaves before spraying the entire bush. Using spray fertilizers during the hot summer will likely burn the foliage and is not recommended.

Some rosarians recommend that roses be given a break during the hot summer months with no fertilizer applications. Then start the slow-release fertilizer again in September, with the last application around mid-October. Other rosarians prefer to continue using slow-release fertilizer at half-strength throughout the summer. Determine what works best for your roses in your conditions.

Miniature roses usually require less fertilizer than other types. Container roses require less total fertilizer than those grown in the ground; however, they need more frequent applications as their roots can't seek further nutrients beyond the confines of their pot. Always water thoroughly before and after fertilizing to help prevent burn. Follow directions on the container when using any fertilizer.

Preventative Care

- Deep water to a depth of 2 feet throughout the growing season.
- Hose off roses regularly with water. Spray in the early morning before the sun gets hot to decrease chances of leaf burn. Spray the underside of the leaf. This will keep the roses clean, increase the surrounding humidity, and will help to control insects before they can cause any damage.
- Use a forceful water spray to eliminate aphids and spider mites.
- Roses slow down during our hot months and produce smaller and fewer blooms. Remove spent blooms by cutting back to the first five-leaflet set. Leave as much foliage as possible, which will help to shade the bush.
- Shade the trunks of tree roses during our hot summers to prevent sunburn. Painting the trunk with white tree paint or covering the trunk with cardboard or shade cloth will also help.
- Watch for sucker growth on grafted roses. These are canes that come from below the bud union. They appear different from the other canes. Cut them off below the bud union.
- Seal all pruning cuts with a good wood glue to prevent cane borers from entering. The borer larva eats the stem center and the infested cane grows poorly or dies. Cut back the injured cane an inch at a time until you find healthy wood.
- Learn to recognize Lady Beetles, Lace Wings and other beneficial insects in all stages of their lives (egg, pupa, adult).
- Check roses on a regular basis to identify potential problems.

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MONTHLY ROSE CALENDAR

January	February	March	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check out the latest catalogs; order roses. • Test pH. Roses prefer a neutral to slightly acidic soil. • This month is the month to prune all of your established rose bushes. After you have finished pruning, clean up all the leaves and debris around the bush. • Transplant existing rose bushes and plant around the bare-root roses and container roses. Fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer after planting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue pruning and planting of bare-root roses. • Plant container roses. • Fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer. • Add 4 to 6 inches of mulch around the plant to retain moisture, cool the roots and control weeds. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. • Spray with a good fungicide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant container roses. • Apply supplemental liquid fertilizer, epsom salts, etc. • Continue to spray with fungicide to prevent mildew. • Water slowly and deeply to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. • Learn how to groom your roses for the spring rose shows. • Remove side buds on Hybrid teas and center bud on shrubs and Floribundas to encourage larger blooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant container roses. • Fertilize roses with slow release fertilizer. • Add more mulch. • Remove spent blooms. • Spray with fungicide as needed. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings.
May	June	July	August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant container roses. • Remove spent blooms. • Continue spraying with fungicide as needed. • Watch for insects this month. A forceful spray of water every other morning is a good way to prevent aphids and spider mites. • Fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep watering is essential June thru September. Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings, but don't allow the plant to become stressed. • Hose off your roses with a strong spray of water at least twice a week. This will help to control spider mites and dust. • Remove spent blooms. • Spray with fungicide if needed, but do so early in the morning to prevent possible leaf burn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings, but don't allow the plant to become stressed. • Remove spent blooms. • Hose off the rose bushes every other day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings, but don't allow the plant to become stressed. • Remove any spent blooms. • Continue to hose off the bushes.
September	October	November	December
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prune roses lightly and remove old or dead canes. • Use a slow-release fertilizer. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings, but don't allow the plant to become stressed. • Remove spent blooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed with a supplemental liquid fertilizer. • Remove spent blooms. • Spray with fungicide for prevention of mildew. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. • Remove side buds and center buds to encourage larger blooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed with a liquid fertilizer. • Spray with fungicide as needed. • Remove spent blooms. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. • Visit the local rose shows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove spent blooms. • Enjoy the roses! This is one of the best times of the year for blooms. • Water slowly to a depth of 2 feet. Allow the soil to dry out between waterings. • Plan for January. • Clean, oil and sharpen tools.