

How To Prune Your Roses

Roses will grow well and produce better flowers if correctly pruned. Pruning is not a daunting task but should be approached with a few simple points in mind.

BRIEFLY:

Main pruning times- Winter, June/July. Summer, December, January/February.

Tools needed: - Sharp secateurs, pruning saw and gloves.

Other pruning times: - any time that your rose stops flowering or looks untidy.

Rose pruning is really easy. Unless you do something very strange, you virtually can't do any harm. The object of pruning is to create an open centre in your plant which will help control disease and ensure better flowering.

Bush, Standard & Miniature Roses

Winter pruning is generally harder than other times but, depending on variety, can be quite hard after each flowering time.

1. Prune about half the foliage from the top of your plant to clear away unwanted growth.
2. Have a good look at your bush and cut out weak or small shoots and all dead, old wood.
3. Established roses need growths removed that are three or more years old. Saw them off at the base. This step encourages formation of new, flowering growth. The freshest looking limbs are this year's growth- darker limbs are last year's- old, brownish limbs are three years old or more.
4. **Water shoots**, those vigorous, sometimes dark coloured growths that appear from the base of your rose, **above** the bud union, are the basis for future flowers. They generally form a cluster of flowers at the top and should be trimmed back by about half.
5. **Suckers** coming from **below** the bud union should be completely removed with a sharp knife. You may even need to dig slightly below ground level to cut suckers off flush with the stem.
6. Any remaining limbs need to be cut back by about half to an outward facing bud at an angle of about 45°. Slope the cut away from the bud to avoid water draining into it.
7. Immediately after Winter pruning spray with **Lime Sulphur** or **PestOil**.

Hard pruning should be carried out twice each year - in Winter (about July) and Summer (January/February). Large cuts can be painted with a pruning paint if desired.

Lighter pruning is desirable at other times of the year. Quite often, just picking bunches of flowers will do, but if your rose stops flowering then trim it back, feed it with **All Purpose Plant Food** and you'll probably get more flowers.

Clean your secateurs after pruning each bush by dipping them in a disinfectant to avoid spreading any diseases.

Never use blunt tools as a torn, jagged cut is a perfect entry for disease.

Pruning Climbing & Weeping Roses

The first two years for a climbing rose are very important. In this time all the long canes rising from the base should be tied to a frame or support. The only pruning should be removal of unwanted canes and, in late Autumn, trim about 45cm from remaining canes to encourage growth of side shoots (laterals).

Flowering stems will grow from the laterals. These flowering stems should be cut back, after flowering, 2 to 3 buds above the union with the lateral. Picking flowers will do this. Old canes should be removed at their base and a new cane will grow to be treated as previously. Usually there are few or no flowers on a climber in its first year.

Weeping roses are pruned in late Summer by removing half to a third of the length of the pendulous canes, hence strengthening those at the top. Prune to an outside bud that will give you a shoot growing in the direction you desire

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