



Growing Roses in Vermont

OH 68

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Interest:

- *large family Rosaceae, includes many other ornamentals (flower, shrubs, trees)
- *one of most complex groups of ornamentals, thousands of cultivars in various classes
- *native to most parts of the world, depending on the species
- *one of oldest cultivated groups of plants, first mentioned in 2300 BC
- *used herbally as well as ornamentally over centuries, hips rich in vitamin C

Habit:

- *growth rate, height, width, hardiness all vary with cultivar (see separate listing)

Planting:

- *check fertility, pH with soil test--lime if needed
- *dig large hole as possible, 2 times as wide and across as roots (if possible)
- *amend backfill with up to half compost, peat moss or similar organic matter
- *add phosphorus in hole at planting
- *key is to cover bud graft--lower swollen area on most roses--less hardy area
- *if bare root (just that in spring, only buds on top), mound soil over most of canes--helps prevent canes and buds from drying out, helps prevent suckers from below bud graft

Culture:

- *soil--well-drained, some species prefer sandy
- *light--sun
- *watering--well watered
- *fertility--high fertility as with rose fertilizer; organic may not be sufficient unless highly fertile and organic soil; may combine organic such as seaweed or fish emulsion with controlled release fertilizer; hybrid teas often require more fertility than shrub types

Landscape Uses:

- *borders--usually solely for roses, unless shrub types as backgrounds
- *containers (especially miniature types) and raised beds (often facilitates culture)
- *massing (especially in island beds in lawns, informal curved or formal rectangular)
- *hedges or along walls, especially shrub and rugosa types
- *fences and trellises (climbing types)

Pruning:

- *remove dead canes, branches--late spring after see bud break
- *shape--remove long branches where not desired, early spring or after bloom
- *fall only if diseased or dead wood, or need to fit under overwintering covers; some prune in late fall or winter, but then if dieback have to re prune in spring, often lower; pruning too early in fall allows diseases to enter with slow or no wound healing
- *for minimal strong branches to produce show flowers on modern hybrids
- *cut back to just above a bud facing in direction new branch is desired
- *remove overlapping, crossing canes

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- *remove older canes, about 1/3 each year
- *choose cultivars for shape, habit, size rather than prune extensively to those desired

Staking:

- *allow to grow in natural form, generally not needed
- *climbing types (many shrub types are long cane or arching, not truly climbing):
- *train up wall or on trellis (2D or 3D shape), natural or in vase or other design
- *train on network or crossing twine, one foot off ground, for maximum shoots
- *wrap around trunks of spring flowering trees and allow to grow up through

Winter protection:

- *choose hardy varieties, minimal to none needed; "modern" hybrids (see separate listing) are generally not hardy except in warm microclimates in Vermont
- *if marginally hardy: styrofoam rose cones; mound one foot or more around base mulch or straw or similar organic if no rodents and small mammals, soil if rodents, apply either late in fall around Thanksgiving; some recommend fresh horse manure late in Fall; remove mulches when snow melts in Spring or early as possible
- *climbing--if not hardy, remove from supports and lay on ground, covering as above
- *key is to cover bud graft--lower swollen area on most roses--less hardy area

Transplanting:

- *traditionally by digging as many roots as possible, cutting tops back to 6-12" high
- *soak ground (forced pressure from nozzle in ground) until plant pulls out readily

Pests:

- *aphids--insectidal soaps, rose sprays
- *Japanese beetles--same as above, pick off, not traps
- *cane borers--rose sprays, systemic insecticides
- *rose chafer--as for aphids
- *many more, susceptibility varies with species and even cultivar, more with modern hybrids than shrub types, modern types generally need intense spray schedule
- *scout weekly if not daily
- *choose resistant varieties to diseases

Diseases:

- *powdery mildew--fungicide, Remedy
- *black spot--specific fungicide
- *leaf spots--fungicides
- *viruses--prune infected parts, keep plants healthy

References (pests and diseases):

Pirone, Pascal P. *Diseases and Pests of Ornamental Plants*. 1978. 5th ed. Wiley
Olkowski, W., S. Daar and H. Olkowski. *The Gardener's Guide to Common Sense Pest Control*. 1995. Taunton Press.

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