



FLOWERS

Selecting and Planting Roses

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Quick Facts...

Select a site in full sun with well-drained soil, free of competing tree and shrub roots.

Select recommended plants from a reputable nursery or mail-order catalog and plant properly in good or improved soil.

Plant bare-root and packaged roses in early spring and protect them by covering the entire plant with loose, loamy, moist soil until the root system starts to function.

Do not allow bare-root and packaged roses to dry out before and after planting.

Roses can grow in most communities in Colorado. Colorado roses exhibit some of the most vivid colors seen anywhere in the country.

The American Rose Society lists 48 classifications for roses, but roses in Colorado can generally be said to fall into one of the following types: hybrid tea, miniature, floribunda, grandiflora, climber, polyantha, shrub and Old Garden Rose (OGR).

The hybrid tea, originally a cross between a tea rose and a hybrid perpetual, is the most popular garden rose. Generally, they produce large blooms on long stems and are preferred for exhibition and cut flowers. Miniatures are naturally dwarf roses and are rapidly gaining in popularity. With proper care, they are a good choice for potted indoor culture. Because of their hardiness, they are excellent for outdoor use.

The first floribunda was produced from a cross between a hybrid tea and a polyantha. These roses usually have more but smaller blooms than hybrid teas. They are somewhat harder than grandifloras and hybrid teas.

The original grandiflora was produced from a cross between a hybrid tea and a floribunda. This plant is similar in size to the hybrid tea but usually has more but slightly smaller blossoms.

The climbing hybrid teas and climbing grandifloras are not recommended for most areas of Colorado because most will bloom only on the previous year's growth. During severe winters, the previous year's growth on these climbers is damaged by cold temperatures and drying. This results in little or no bloom or blooms of poor quality the following season. There are, however, a number of repeat-blooming, large flowered climbers (LCL) that do well in Colorado's climate. Most of these climbers will bloom on the current year's growth (new wood) and have the added advantage of repeat flowers.

The term "shrub rose" is used loosely to cover roses not previously mentioned. Some of the hardiest of all roses can be found in this group. With its beauty, perfume and history, the shrub rose can be a satisfactory part of the landscape. Included in this group are the English Roses developed by David Austin. There are over 100 varieties and most are repeat flowering and fragrant with the flower form of the Old Garden Roses.

Old Garden Roses (OGR) are roses whose class or type were introduced prior to 1867. Most but not all are once-blooming varieties and winter hardy. Their culture would be about the same as the shrub rose. These roses do very well in our climate with a minimum of care.

Selecting Plants

Roses are sold through mail-order nurseries, local garden and nursery outlets, retail departments and grocery stores. Generally mail-order nurseries handle bare-root, dormant roses. Local nurseries usually handle potted roses.

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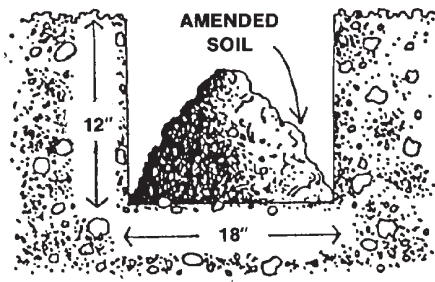


Figure 1: Previously prepared bed.

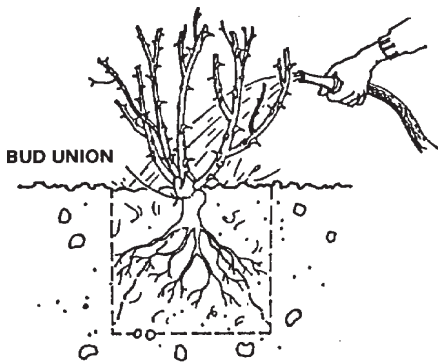


Figure 2: Proper watering.

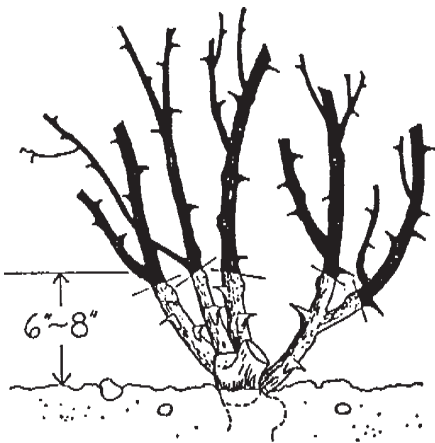


Figure 3: Proper pruning.

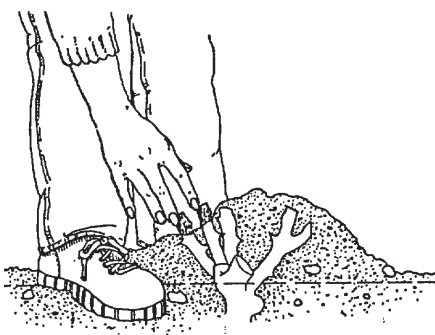


Figure 4: Mound soil on plant.

Department and grocery stores may offer packaged or potted roses or both.

Most experienced rose growers prefer the bare-root, dormant plant from a reputable nursery. Potted roses are a viable choice only when the nursery has used good culture in the potting and care of the plants. Make sure a packaged rose is purchased before the plant has had a chance to dry out and deteriorate on the shelf.

Site Selection

Site selection is important. A good choice is an area that gets full sun and good air circulation. In areas where there is a problem with winds, protect the roses from the prevailing wind.

A good second choice is a location that gets full sun during the early morning hours. This might be on the east side of buildings or an area that is shaded by trees in the afternoon. Locate the plants so they receive a minimum of five to six hours of sunshine. The early sunshine will dry off the plants and help prevent diseases.

When choosing a location, avoid places where the roses have to compete with tree or shrub roots for water and nutrients. Good drainage is also a factor in site selection.

Planting

For bare-root roses, spring planting is preferred over fall. A good planting time is six to seven weeks before the last killing spring frost.

Prepare rose beds or planting holes prior to receiving the roses. If bare-root and packaged plants appear dry when they are received, soak them in a bucket of water overnight. Do not leave them in water for more than 24 hours.

If planting in a previously prepared bed, dig the hole so it accommodates the root system, usually about 18 inches in diameter and 12 inches deep. If the roses are planted in soil that has not been prepared in advance, dig the hole at least that large. If the soil is compacted or needs improving, the planting hole may be as large as 36 inches in diameter and 18 inches deep.

If the subsoil in the bottom of the planting hole or rose bed is heavy clay, it may be desirable to replace a portion of this subsoil with a good grade of peat moss or compost. Thoroughly mix the peat moss or compost (equal in volume to one-third to one-half of the kept soil) with the good soil. (See Figure 1.)

Never allow the plants to dry out. They may be kept in a bucket of water while the hole is being prepared. When the hole is ready, prepare the plant by pruning any damaged or broken roots. Excessively long roots may be shortened, but leave 8 to 10 inches of healthy root if possible.

While planting, support the plant so the bud union is at or slightly below ground level. Do not pack the soil around the roots. Firm with your hands or let water from the hose settle the soil. It is important to water deeply at this time, but do not puddle the soil as this tends to separate the soil components. (See Figure 2.)

Because the plant was probably topped by machine, with no consideration for proper pruning, prune the canes. Make the pruning cuts at a 30 to 45 degree angle, 1/4 inch above a bud eye, leaving about 6 to 8 inches of the cane. In order to keep the center of the plant open for better air circulation and light penetration, these cuts should usually be made to an outward facing bud eye. (See Figure 3.)

Next, cover the entire plant with loose, loamy, moist soil. This will keep the canes from drying out while a root system is being established and will protect the plant from possible frost damage. Preventing the canes from



Figure 5: Break up the root ball.

drying out is probably the most important step to take when planting a bare-root rose in Colorado because of the dry climate (low humidity). (See Figure 4.) This cover may be left on from two to seven weeks, depending on the weather, the plant's progress and the time of planting. Watch the progress of the plant by exposing the tips of the canes. Be careful when removing the soil from around the canes to avoid damage to the new, tender growth. Water from a garden hose may be the best way to remove this cover.

Potted Roses

Potted roses can be planted during the growing season, any time after the last killing frost. If planting late in the season, the plant should have time to become well established in its new location before the first killing frost. Prepare the planting hole much the same as for bare-root roses, with the depth determined by the height of the bud union from the bottom of the container. Carefully remove the plant from the container and place it in the hole without disturbing the root ball. Make sure the bud union is at or slightly below ground level. Fill in around the root ball with soil. If the plant roots are pot bound, break up the root ball. This can be done by using water pressure through a hose and soil needle or a piece of pipe attached to a garden hose. (See Figure 5.)

Some Recommended Varieties

Table 1 lists popular rose varieties known to do well in Colorado.

¹A.W. Nelson, former Rocky Mountain District and Region 8 director, American Rose Society, and Colorado State University Extension master gardner (deceased); and C.E. Swift, Extension horticulture agent, Tri River Area, Grand Junction. Drawings by Diane Kenney.

Table 1. Recommended roses for Colorado.

Varieties	Color	ARS Ratings
Hybrid Teas		
Brides Dream	Lt. pink	8.0
Captain Harry Stebbings	Deep pink	8.1
Chicago Peace	Pink blend	7.7
Crystalline	White	7.8
*Double Delight	Red blend	8.9
*Electron	Deep pink	7.7
Elina	Lt. yellow	8.6
Elizabeth Taylor	Deep pink	8.8
*First Prize	Pink blend	8.9
Folklore	Orange blend	8.5
Keepsake	Pink blend	8.4
Lynette	White	7.5
Lynn Anderson	Pink blend	+
Marijke Koopman	Med. pink	8.9
*Miss All American Beauty	Deep pink	8.2
*Mister Lincoln	Dark red	8.8
*Olympiad	Med. red	9.1
*Paradise	Mauve	8.3
*Peace	Yellow blend	8.6
Polarstern	White	7.8
Pristine	White	9.2
*Sheer Bliss	White	7.8
*Tiffany	Pink blend	8.3
*Touch of Class	Orange pink	9.5
Grandifloras		
*Aquarius	Pink blend	8.0
Gold Medal	Med. yellow	8.8
*Pink Parfait	Pink blend	8.2
*Prima Donna	Deep pink	7.5
*Queen Elizabeth	Med. pink	9.0
Sonia	Pink blend	8.1
*Tournament of Roses	Med. pink	8.0
Floribundas		
*Angel Face	Mauve	8.1
Dicky	Orange pink	8.8
*Europeana	Dark red	9.0
*First Edition	Orange pink	8.6
*Gene Boerner	Med. pink	8.5
Iceberg	White	8.7
*Impatient	Orange pink	7.8
*Ivory Fashion	White	8.6
Lavaglut	Dark red	8.4
Little Darling	Yellow blend	8.6
Nicole (Koricole)	White	9.0
Playboy	Red blend	8.1
Playgirl	Med. pink	8.1
Royal Occasion	Orange red	8.5
Sexy Remy	Med. pink	9.0
*Showbiz	Med. red	8.6
*Sun Flare	Med. yellow	8.1
*Sunsprite	Deep yellow	8.7

ARS Rating — National Rose Ratings as of 1996.

10.0	Perfect
9.0-9.9	Outstanding
8.0-8.9	Excellent
7.0-7.9	Good
6.0-6.9	Fair
5.9 and lower	Of questionable value

Varieties	Color	ARS Ratings
Miniatures		
Acey Deucey	Med. red	8.3
**Cupcake	Med. pink	8.5
Dreamglo	Red blend	8.5
Fairhope	Lt. yellow	8.0
Giggles	Med. pink	9.0
Irresistible	White	8.0
**Jean Henneally	Apricot blend	9.7
**Kristen	Red blend	8.6
**Little Jackie	Orange blend	8.6
**Magic Carousel	Red blend	9.0
Millie Walters	Orange pink	8.6
Minnie Pearl	Pink blend	9.4
**Party Girl	Yellow blend	9.0
Pierrine	Orange pink	9.4
**Rainbow's End	Yellow blend	9.0
Red Beauty	Dark red	8.4
**Rise 'N' Shine	Med. yellow	9.1
**Snow Bride	White	9.3
**Starina	Orange red	9.0
Climbing Miniatures		
Candy Cane	Pink blend	8.1
Hi Ho	Orange pink	8.3
**Jeannie LaJoie	Med. pink	9.2
Climbers (LCL) Repeat Blooming, Large Flowered		
Altissimo	Med. red	9.3
*America	Orange pink	8.8
Blaze	Med. red	7.4
Don Juan	Dark red	8.2
Dortmund	Med. red	9.1
Galwan Bay	Orange pink	8.0
Handel	Red blend	8.1
Shrub		
*Bonica	Med. pink	9.1
Frau Dogmar Hartopp	Med. pink	8.5
Golden Wings	Lt. yellow	7.9
***Graham Thomas	Deep yellow	7.9
Hanseat	Med. pink	7.7
***Heritage	Lt. pink	8.7
Will Scarlet	Med. red	8.2
Old Garden Roses (OLG)		
Alba Semi-Plena	White	8.5
Austrian Copper (R. foetida bicolor)	Red blend	8.1
Baronne Prevost	Med. pink	8.5
Comte de Chambord	Pink blend	8.0
Fanlin-Latour	Lt. pink	8.2
Harison's Yellow	Deep yellow	8.0
Madame (Mme) Hardy	White	9.2
Marchesa Boccella	Lt. pink	8.9
Reine des Violettes	Mauve	8.0
Rose Mundi	Pink blend	8.6
R. rugosa	Mauve	8.4
Rose de Rescht	Deep pink	8.6
Sombreuil	White	8.8

*All America Rose Selection Winner.

**American Rose Society Award of Excellence.