



Selecting a Rose for Your Garden

A beautiful rose can be the star of any garden. Roses offer a long blooming season, come in a variety of colors, and many are fragrant. When planted in the right spot, roses will thrive for years.

Roses require six hours of sunlight for best performance. The soil should be rich in organic matter and well-drained. Smaller roses are adapted to containers. Some roses are bred to have greater resistance to common pests and diseases. If you live in an area where certain pests or diseases are prevalent, you will want to select a variety that is not likely to be affected by them. In Western Oregon, late January through early March is the ideal time to plant bare-root roses while they are dormant. In Central Oregon, wait until late April or May.

This handout covers the main types of roses. For information on planting, watering, fertilizing, pruning, and pest management, refer to the resources listed at the end of this handout.

Rose Types

Species (Wild) Roses are roses that grow naturally in the wild and are known for their hardiness and low maintenance. They grow vigorously and may be used in hedgerows, wild gardens, or large spaces. They are not suitable for small formal gardens. Examples include: Nootka Rose (*Rosa nootkana*), Swamp Rose (*Rosa pisocarpa*), Wood's Rose (*Rosa woodsia*), and Baldhip Rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*).

Caution: Two common "wild" roses in Oregon—Sweetbriar Rose (*Rosa rubiginosa/eglantaria*) and Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*) are invasive/noxious plants. Do not transplant wild roses into your garden.

Old Garden Roses are roses introduced before 1867. These varieties often bloom only once, but are quite fragrant, hardy, and considered heirloom varieties. There are many subclasses of these roses, including moss and climbing roses. Old garden roses that do well in the Pacific Northwest include 'Autumn Damask,' 'Comte de Chambord,' and 'Stanwell Perpetual.'

Modern Roses are varieties introduced after 1867. They are derived from old garden and wild roses, with large flowers in various colors, compact growth, repeat blooms, and good disease resistance. Subtypes include:

- Hybrid Tea Roses are the most popular classic roses with perfectly formed single flowers on long, sturdy stems. Their fragrance and repeat blooming make them garden favorites, especially the disease-resistant varieties.
- Floribunda Roses were created by crossing a hybrid tea with a polyantha rose. They have single to double petals and grow in clusters on the tips of prickly stems. They come in a variety of colors, are fragrant, and bloom continuously.
- Grandiflora Roses are a cross between hybrid tea roses and floribunda roses. They are repeat bloomers, produce fragrant flowers in clusters, and grow taller than floribundas.

- Shrub Roses are popular for their continuous blooms and high disease resistance. They tend to grow more horizontally than vertically, making them ideal for mass plantings or hedges. They include the Knock Out, Flower Carpet, and the Drift series of roses.
- Ground Cover Roses resemble shrub roses but usually grow no taller than three feet. They are ideal for dense planting to cover a bank or rock wall.
- Climbing Roses do not actually “climb” with tendrils or by winding. They can be trained along a support structure and, when laid horizontally, will produce flowers all along the stem. Usually, they reach 8 to 20 feet tall and will produce repeat blooms.
- Rambler Roses are ancestors of old climbing roses. They grow 20 to 30 feet tall and bloom only once per season.
- English Roses, also known as *David Austin Roses*, were created by David Austin through the hybridization of traditional, once-blooming garden roses with contemporary hybrid teas and floribundas. These cultivars are distinguished by their fragrant blossoms, which persist throughout the entire growing season.
- Miniature Roses are small, compact roses with tiny flowers. They are ideal for planting in containers.

OSU Extension and Other Resources

Planting Bare Root Roses in Spring

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/em-9474-planting-bare-root-roses-spring>

Take Steps in Fall to Protect Roses in Winter

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/flowers-shrubs-trees/take-steps-fall-protect-roses-winter>

Landscaping with Roses

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/flowers-shrubs-trees/landscaping-roses>

Pruning Roses

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/flowers-shrubs-trees/pruning-roses>

Caring For Roses

<https://clackamascountymastergardeners.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/rose-care.pdf>

Growing Roses in the Pacific Northwest by Nita-Jo Rountree, Sasquatch Books, 2017

Master Gardener™ Advice

Call Home Horticulture Helpline: 503-655-8631 (Clackamas County), 503-821-1150 (Washington County), 503-445-4608 (Multnomah County).

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