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About the Author

Colleen Ashley has been a keen gardener for years.

Colleen said, "My garden is a great place to relax after a busy day. I can get plenty of exercise and grow most of our vegetables as well!"

Colleen started growing roses just a few years ago.

She said, "I had not started growing them earlier because many people told me they were hard to get good results with. Now, I wish I had started years ago."

Colleen said, "There are pests and other problems, but they are fairly simple to fix. "

"The huge range of rose varieties includes many which can be grown by almost anyone to get good results."

"I wrote my book to help people become successful with their roses more easily, so they and their families can enjoy the beautiful displays and perfumes which they offer."

"We grow roses for many reasons. They repay our effort and attention many times over.

Roses are available in many varieties with new ones coming to our notice every season. They flower for a good length of time, many are disease resistant and everyone loves to get some!

Now, you can get great results with your roses just by following the tips and ideas which Colleen shares in "Easy Guide to Growing Roses"!

Introduction

Many gardeners think that roses are hard to get good results with.

That was the reason why I didn't start growing them myself for a long time.

I was lucky that someone showed me that rose growing is much easier than it used to be.

And, the results that we get are much better because of the advances in rose breeding and simplified techniques.

I want to share with you what I've learned from my own garden and research so you can start enjoying the effect of roses in your garden and your home!

There are thousands of varieties for you to choose from with even more available each season.

You can also find many older, popular varieties which have been favorites for many years.

You still need to prepare your soil and look after your plants but that's no hardship for any gardener!

A friend said to me the hardest part of growing roses is deciding which variety to plant because of the wealth of choices available!

I will guide you to ensure you have maximum enjoyment and get the best possible results.

There are roses which you can grow in almost any garden, large or small, even indoors!

And roses are good bedfellows with most other plants that you might want to put near them.

Let's get started on your new Rose adventure!

Colleen Ashley

Why Grow Roses.

Almost anyone can grow roses successfully, even if they have had no success in the past.

By following the tips and methods in this book you can expect to get good results. But, I cannot guarantee no dead plants or other problems because every rose grower has failures even after years of growing them.

The appeal of rose growing continues to grow though many people believe that roses are a bigger challenge than many other types of plants.

Every rose is developed to have certain features which the propagator liked in the varieties they combined to breed it.

It's possible that some other desirable qualities have been diminished slightly.

But, there are many varieties available and proper management will reduce or eliminate the problems.

Planning for Your Roses

Do you have a plan of your garden? That makes it easy to decide where you can put your new roses to get the best results with them and not upset your other plants.

You might start a garden diary (either paper or digital) to record all your experiences. That will become a valuable reference source for the seasons to come.

You could record the details of your garden area on a separate sheet or file.

Mark the dimensions, the usual wind direction and compass points, the location of all structures; dog kennel, chicken house, compost bin, your home, garage, shed(s), fences and pathways.

You can find roses which are suitable for most areas but there are some important requirements to keep in mind:

1. Roses need at least 4 hours sunshine each day of the season. They can be grown in shaded areas but the lack of sunlight will reduce the vigor of the plants and the number and quality of the blooms.
2. They will not thrive in areas where they are competing with large or aggressive trees and shrubs for nourishment.
3. Roses also need good air circulation around the plants.

You can get roses which will fit with any design you think of.

You might choose the plants on the basis of the color of their flowers or the shape they grow into or other features which appeal to you.

There are varieties which you can put in borders where a tall arching variety would be out of place.

Many others are great in containers.

Own Root Roses and Rootstock Varieties.

Many modern rose varieties may have been grafted on to a rootstock of a different variety to take advantage of some natural qualities of that root stock.

Other roses are grown without being grafted. These are always true to their variety.

Although grafted stock were most popular for several years, there is more demand lately for own root plants.

The older "heritage" varieties are usually grown on their own root systems and also furnish root stocks used for many other varieties.

We cannot make definite statements about the superiority of one type over the other in all instances but here are a few observations which can help you when you are looking for more roses to grow.

It's a good general rule to use the own root version of a rose where it has been found suitable for your area. It may be less vigorous and produce fewer blooms than one grafted onto another rootstock, but you will avoid the possibility of suckers appearing from the rootstock variety.

If you are growing a grafted variety in a cold area, you may need to bury the graft a few inches below the surface of the soil so it is not damaged during the cold weather.

Why Join A Rose Club?

I admit a bias on this question. I believe that joining an organized group of rose growers is one of the most valuable investments we can make to improve our gardening knowledge and results.

I have included links to various organizations in different countries in the Resources section of this book. Many of them will have links to other groups in most countries.

I suggest that you connect with any local rose or garden club as a first step. Most will let you attend a couple of meetings before asking you to decide if you will become a Member.

Benefits of the groups vary. You will meet people that share your interest in roses and are willing to help with advice from their own experience.

Most clubs have connections with State, Federal and even International groups.

These connections can be useful for making connections when you travel to other areas or want to find some feedback about products from that area.

They may also have discount arrangements with suppliers of various services and products for their Members.

Buying Roses

The main sources for buying roses are from local nurseries and other plant sellers or from mail or internet catalogs.

Most roses from suppliers outside your area will be supplied as bare root roses. They are plants which had all the soil removed from them when they became dormant. Then, they were stored in cool chambers and offered for sale in that form. The lack of soil reduces the cost of shipping.

Most bare root plants are shipped when the weather is cool to ensure the roses stay dormant.

Potted roses are actively growing. Their root systems are active and they may have leaves and flowers which make them more attractive to the customers of the nurseries and stores which sell them.

They are shipped almost anytime except when the weather is so warm it may cause damage.

Buying Local or Internet?

My own preference is to buy local where I can find a knowledgeable and helpful supplier.

You may pay a little more. If it's a lot more, you can still go to the 'Net!

But, the advantages of their local gardening knowledge and convenience of getting what you want immediately are important.

Planting Your Roses.

Prepare the area where you will locate your roses.

But, it's worth doing some testing first so you know about any deficiencies in your soil.

You can get a cheap pH test kit or get a serious soil test through your local Agricultural extension service. If you don't have that sort of facility in your area, check your local University.

A pH test kit is easy to use.

They come with instructions and diagrams so I will only give some general tips here.

The best pH for roses is generally around 6.5

If the soil is much lower, it is classed as acidic; you may need to add some ground lime.

The finer the particles, the quicker the effect. But, don't add very much in one application or you might swing things too far in the other direction.

If the soil shows high on acidity, you can correct this with compost and manure.

Some people will prepare the area of the bed where they will put the rose(s) but will not disturb the rest of the bed. This can result in the water added around the rose's roots being trapped there and the roots being waterlogged.

It is always best to take the opportunity when you add more plants to check the rest of the bed and fix any problems there at the time.

You can check the drainage by pouring some water into the hole where you will plant your rose and timing how long it takes to drain away.

Prepare your soil by adding about 1-part organic matter to 4 parts soil. Mix thoroughly.

When you are ready to plant the rose, put some of your prepared compost in the bottom of the hole. This should include natural materials from your

garden.

Then, loosen the roots of the rose and spread them over the soil in the hole.

Then, fill the rest of the hole with the soil.

Spread any extra soil which is left over on top of the garden area.

In warmer areas, you can plant your grafted roses with the graft above the soil. But, put that at least an inch below the soil if you're in a cold area to give the graft a little protection from the coldest days.

This is something you can check with other rose rowers in your area, just to be safer.

Watering Your Roses.

Water is essential for the good health of your roses as much as it is for yourself.

Roses depend on regular watering.

It is also useful for reducing pest and disease problems.

Check the moisture level in the top couple of inches of soil.

If they are dry, you must water as soon as the sun starts to set.

Watering in the hottest part of the day will reduce the water received by the roses and could burn the plants as well.

A drip system is a good way to provide regular water to your roses.

It reduces the amount of water on the leaves which helps to reduce pest and disease problems.

Light watering is a waste of water and your time because it is likely to evaporate or leach through the soil before the roses can absorb it.

Watering your roses by hand is a nice way to check on your plants' health and wellbeing.

It is also relaxing to share some time with your plants and forget for a few minutes the daily grind.

Another advantage is that you can use the time to check the plants for early signs of trouble or distress.

Water should be supplied to a depth of about 18 inches (40 cm) where you plant your roses. But, make sure the surrounding area does not make the water collect around the roots of your rose plants.

Drip irrigation with black tubing and nozzles at specific distances will ensure your plants get the right amount of water without risk of flooding.

This will also help to reduce weeds as the amount of water is little more than what the rose plants absorb.

Controlled watering will reduce the effects of some diseases.

Spraying water on the plants leaves will remove some spores and other diseased matter.

If you use overhead sprinklers for watering, try to restrict it to warm days and do it early morning to let the leaves completely dry before the sun starts to warm them up.

Cheap Tools are No Bargain

My first tip is to get quality tools and look after them.

Cheap tools are often a costly error.

The bargain tools can cause damage to your precious roses and other plants.

They can also cause damage to you! Cuts and abrasions are bad enough.

But, the effort of handling cheap saws and secateurs can stress your back and arms which can lead to long-term health problems which could reduce your ability to enjoy and improve your garden!

Many cheap tools will require regular replacement. So, they give you poor results, discomfort and end up costing more than the better quality items would!

Rough cuts from cheap tools are harder to complete and also can leave scars where pests can hide.

Popular Rose Types.

The Rose “family” is very broad and full of many different plants which can fit into just about any type of garden you want.

Heritage varieties are roses which were developed before the twentieth century. They are fairly easy to grow but some may be more susceptible to diseases which some more recently developed varieties have some resistance to.

But, growers say that the old varieties give results which make any extra effort worthwhile.



The most popular type of rose is the **Hybrid Tea** varieties which produce a single bloom on a long stem.

These are the florist’s choice and relatively easy to grow.

They are a bush rose.

Another bush rose group are the

Floribunda which produce clusters of flowers.

Pruning Your Roses.

Don't start pruning until the rose is in its dormant state except to clear away damaged pieces.

Pruning is important part of caring for your prized rose plants.

But, more people reduce the success with their roses by over-pruning rather than under-pruning them!

The first year after you plant new roses, I suggest that you don't prune them unless there is some damage which you need to remove.

That year, the plant will be able to use the extra leaf area and limbs to absorb more sunlight and nutrients.

You will also be able to see how the shape and strength of the plant is developing.

I don't recommend heavy pruning.

Some people will cut away new growth where blooms would have been produced and then wonder why they got so few.

Clear out dead and damaged wood.

Cut away very thin canes because they are taking nutrient but aren't big or strong enough to support flower growth.

Remove any green shoots which come from dead or aged wood as these will not help the plant produce more blooms.

Don't bother about a crossed branch in the plant unless it is easy to remove.

Tidy up the base of the plant and clean away grass and other useless plants which clutter the area around the rose and provide resting places for pests.

When you prune back to a bud, get as close as you can without damaging it. If you do cause damage, you will have to cut that one away or disease could develop there.

If the cut is okay, check the condition of the wood in the cut; if the inner surface is dark, cut it away or the same disease could take hold.

Myths of Rose Care

With roses one of the most popular and varied plant families, you'd expect that some myths have grown about their care.

#1 Cut only at a 45 degree angle above a budeye to avoid dieback.

The truth is that cutting higher than essential (1/8th Inch is good!) exposes and weakens the length of cane between the budeye and the cut so it will deteriorate and die.

But, the cut can be straight or at an angle without concern as long as the budeye is not damaged.

If the budeye is harmed, then another cut should be made just above the next budeye and the cut-off piece destroyed.

#2 Before you put your new rose in position, put a mound of earth in the bottom. Then, spread the roots of the rose over it before filling the hole in.

This is widely taught and done. But, I believe that opinions are changing, When you put the soil in the hole and press the roots of your new rose around it, you compress the soil which hinders water drainage and might make the soil compact and harden.

If you put a layer of well-worked compost in the hole and spread the roots over that, there is no compaction or blockage of water and the rose has plenty of nourishment and support.

#3 Cut back your roses for bigger blooms.

This is still widely recommended but I'm told that the rose plants need their foliage in the summer to help keep as cool as possible in the warmest weather.

If you want larger blooms, the hard prune might give you them.

If your want more blooms, though probably smaller, then cutting higher may give better results.

This is another of those areas where a visit to your local rosearian could be

the best way to go.

#4 Roses need lots of care.

Roses can be vulnerable in their earliest stages of growth. Some of the failures at that stage are really because of unexpected weather conditions or bad luck. Once your roses are established, they tend to be fairly hardy and few growers begrudge the effort it cost them when the blooms arrive.

Diseases of Roses

There is a wide variation in the susceptibility of various rose species to diseases and pests.

Black Spot: This is probably still the most common problem.

Hybrid Tea varieties are often attacked.

Black spots can be seen on the upper leaf surfaces. The areas surrounding the spots become discolored and leaves drop off. The plant becomes weaker and more susceptible to other diseases as well as pest damage.

Attention to cleaning area around plants, Water onto the soil over the rose's roots. Don't water directly onto the leaves. Don't water in the evening or when the plants won't be able to dry off.

Look for varieties which are resistant to Black Spot.

Powdery Mildew: Fuzz on the leaves of your rose is probably powdery mildew. Leaves curl and discolor. Canes may be distorted.

Treat with Lime Sulfur.

Pests of Roses

Aphids: They attack new growth early in the season.

They attract ants by excreting a sticky honeydew. After some time, the honeydew can develop fungus or mould.

A strong water spray can help push aphids off your plants. The most effective deterrent is to encourage aphid destroying insects like ladybirds.

Ladybirds are sold at some garden suppliers. Release them in the evening or they will be encouraged to fly to other gardens instead of settling on to your plants.

If the store also sells lacewings to eat your aphids, try them out. I'm told the larval and adult stages are both effective aphid destroyers and less likely to desert your garden for your neighbors!

Rose Scale: Small insects infest underside of leaves, hidden by small discs or scales. Lacewings will eat them or you can wash them off with a strong water spray.

Spider Mites: These pests pierce the leaf surfaces and extract juice.

Leaves start to yellow and display dots where the mites have penetrated.

Lime sulfur can be applied during the dormant stage. A pyrethrum-based soap is used during the active season.

Thrips: tiny insects which suck juice from plants. They can destroy the appearance of new flowers and damage buds before they open.

They can be washed off. keeping plants wet will discourage them.

A number of beneficial insects love eating thrips so avoid using potent sprays.

Plants which attract insects which eat aphids include yarrow and some types of catmint.

Japanese Beetles: These pests will cut holes in the rose plant's leaves. Pick them off if there are only a few and drown them in soapy water. If there are



too many, you will need to use an insecticide such as carbaryl. Check with your garden supplier or agricultural extension service whether there is a safer product available in your location.

Good insects.

Praying mantis and bees are among the best friends your roses have!



Growing Roses in Containers

Roses in containers are very popular.

You can put them around your home, on a balcony and brighten areas easily.

Quality potting soil works well in a large pot.

Resist the temptation to use a lot of artificial additives which may cause more foliage which reduce the effect of the blooms.

Clay containers will keep your plant cooler in hot weather but light-colored plastic pots will be preferable in very cold areas. Ceramic pots tend to cause the soil to dry out.

Make sure there is adequate drainage in the base of your containers.

Remember that roses all need several hours of sunlight each day.

Containers should be at least 15 inches (36 cm) in diameter.

After a couple of years, you should remove the plant and repot it so the exhausted growing medium can be replaced to give the plant more nutrients and avoid build-up of disease or pests. It will probably need a larger pot at that time.

If you have more roses in containers, avoid putting them too close to each other to reduce the chance of fungal contamination or pests transferring between the plants. and allow better air circulation between the plants.

Resources

Special Terms

Balling: a condition where the blooms do not open properly. Low temperatures and dampness contributes to this. If your roses do this, adjust the conditions where possible. Or avoid varieties which have many layers of petals.

Cultivar: A form of a plant which has been produced through planned cultivation and is significantly different from its predecessors.

Hybrid: Rose produced from parents that were different varieties. They may occur by cross-pollination by insects in nature or by *hybridizers* in nurseries.

Patented Rose: A variety which the breeder has obtained a patent for. That gives them exclusive rights to propagate and sell those plants. They license other people to do that as well.

Remontant: A plant which blooms more than once in each season.

Rootstock: Hardy rose plant which has a cutting of a more desirable variety grafted to it. The grafted variety will likely be less hardy than the rootstock.

Rustling: Same as the north American term for stealing cattle but applies to people who rustle (steal) cuttings from old roses (or even whole plants) from other people's properties. It's illegal.

Zones: Areas on a map which have similar average temperature ranges. (See **U.S.D.A. Hardiness Zones**)

U.S.A.

U.S.D.A. Hardiness Zones.

<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>

From the website, "The map is the standard which can help gardeners determine which plants are most likely to thrive in a location."

Agricultural Extension Services.

As mentioned in this book, most states of the U.S.A. have an Agricultural Extension Service connected with a major State University.

These provide services (some may have fees) for all sorts of agricultural pursuits at all levels in their state.

The **Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service** has Earth-Kind® trials which certified a number of rose cultivars as very suitable for conditions in Texas.

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkindroses/>

They note that similar programs were established at Colorado State, Iowa State, Kansas State, LSU, University of Minnesota and University of Nebraska.

Rose Organizations.

Interactive map of Rose Societies world-wide on Rose Magazine site.

<http://www.rosemagazine.com/pages/rosesocieties.asp/>

The Heritage Roses Group

www.theheritagerosesgroup.org/

From their website: "The Heritage Roses Group, formed in 1975, as a fellowship of those who care about Old Garden Roses, Species Roses, Old or Unusual Roses - particularly those roses introduced into commerce prior to the year 1867. Its purposes are to preserve, enjoy, and share knowledge about the Old Roses.

The Heritage Roses Group of the United States inspired similar groups in Australia, England, New Zealand, and France."

World federation of Rose Societies.

<http://www.worldrose.org/>

From their site; "We are an Association of the Rose Societies of 39 countries and your gateway to information about the Rose around the World.

American Rose Society.

<http://www.rose.org/>

From their website; "The American Rose Society exists to promote the culture and appreciation of the rose through education and research to members, local rose societies and their members and the public."

Australia**National Rose Society of Australia**

<http://www.rose.org.au/>

From their website: "Formed in 1972. Has about 3,000 Members nationally. Members of rose societies visit gardens owned by members, catch up with like-minded gardening friends, learn more about rose care and enjoy social activities which might take them around the world.'

United Kingdom**Royal Windsor Rose and Horticultural Society**

<http://www.rwrhs.com/>

From their website: "One of the oldest continuous running societies of its kind. Over 120 years, long before Chelsea and Hampton Court, was the most important flower show in Britain."

The Patron is Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth.

Royal National Rose Society

<http://rnrs.org.uk/>

From their website: " Since 1876, the RNRS has supported and promoted this most iconic of flowers in all sorts of ways from encouraging bet practices to trialling new species." The RNRS has the "Gardens of the Rose" just outside St Albans Hertfordshire, England with over 20,000 roses. It is a tourist showpiece and also caters for weddings and other ceremonies.

Royal Horticultural Society

www.rhs.org.uk/

From their website: "What we do: We are driven by a sheer love of plants and the belief that gardeners make the world a better place - this underpins all we do"

Roses Make any Garden Better

Whatever else you grow, I know you will always improve your enjoyment once you start growing roses.

I hope my guide has helped you through any doubts you might have had and made you more confident about you rose growing.

There are great roses for any type of garden anywhere in the World and,you now know that they are easy to grow.

Colleen Ashley

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