

# January Rose Care

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**Spring Pruning** – This is the month to force our roses into a short period of dormancy. Prune back your roses by at least one-half. If plants are five feet tall, cut them back to 2 ½ feet. Cut out all spindly, crossing and dead wood, which will help open up the center of the plant to let the sun get down to the bud union. Dead canes should be removed at the bud union to open up room for new basal breaks. Strip off all leaves and throw them away. Do not leave cuttings as part of the mulch as the old leaves may contain disease spores and over wintering insects. You should end up with from three to eight upright canes for hybrid teas, more for floribundas and shrubs.

**After Pruning** – Spray the soil with Orthene or Diazinon to kill insects, especially thrips that are over wintering below the soil surface. Spray the canes with a good fungicide, such as Funginex, which is a mildew preventative. These are preventative measures that will save much work later on. If mildew does get established, the best new irradicant on the market by far is Compass, available on [Rosemania.com](http://Rosemania.com).

**Fertilizer** – If you use good organic fertilizers like alfalfa pellets and/or Hickman's Rose Food, they may be applied after pruning on established bushes. In our gardens, we apply 2 cups Hickman's plus 1 cup Alfalfa Meal per standard rose bush, grown in soil; 1 cup Hickman's plus ½ cup alfalfa meal per miniature rose bush grown in the soil. For roses grown in pots, use ½ the above rate for standard roses or miniatures. When fertilizing, water thoroughly before application and again afterwards. Epsom salts can be applied later in February or early March, at a rate of ½ cup per large bush. The magnesium will promote basal breaks.

**Planting** – Bare root roses may be planted throughout the month and into February. This is also a good time to transplant. Roses transplant quite well when care is given to keeping the root ball intact and to not let the roots dry out.

If you have never made note of the varieties of roses you have in your garden, this would be a good time to do it. It may be one you love or don't, but it will help you know whether to repeat that variety or not! Even the best of memories don't always last, especially as your rose inventory increases.

For additional information visit one of our many pruning and planting demonstrations or our web site.