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## Tips For The Rose Gardener

By Gray Rollins

Rose gardens are probably the most popular type of garden in the world, ranging from Marie

Antoinette's famous gardens before the French revolution to a few shrubs tucked in a tiny backyard. With their wonderful scents and lovely blossoms, it is no wonder these surprisingly sturdy plants are so popular. After all, no other flowers are used as frequently as roses to symbolize love and friendship. If you'd like to grow beautiful roses in your yard, try a few of these simple rose gardening tips.

1. Roses need to eat regularly, just like any other living thing. Start feeding your roses before you even place them in the planting hole by adding a scoop of compost.
2. Use specially formulated rose food to help your roses really bloom. If you prefer organic methods, give your roses each a small scoop of Epsom salts, a banana peel, and some rotted compost. They will absolutely love these homegrown garden remedies.
3. Roses need to breathe. Be sure you don't allow other plants to get too close to your roses. Keep weeds away from the base of your roses with a 2 to 4 inch layer of rotted compost or chip mulch, but be sure you don't place these weed barriers right against the rose's stems.
4. Mulch also helps keep your roses from getting too dry. Mulch retains water, so your roses need to be watered less frequently during the summer months.
5. Trim out dead wood. Rose canes that are brown and dead may even be harboring insect pests, so remove them immediately. Always make a clean cut instead of crushing the canes as you remove them.
6. Prune out canes that cross over other canes. Those sharp thorns damage the rose's outer skin as easily as they snag your hands. Always prune a cane above a bud that faces away from the inside of the plant. This bud will react to the pruning by sending out a new shoot.
7. If your roses are infested by aphids, spray them with insecticidal soap.

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8. Always remove pruned canes and spotty leaves from the ground. If you don't, any fungus on them will re-infect your roses when there is a heavy rainfall.

Finally, the most important rose gardening tip may just be to wear long sleeves and thick gloves when you are working with your roses. A rose thorn can really hurt, especially if it becomes deeply embedded in your hand.

Gray Rollins is a featured writer for RoseGardenSecrets. To learn more about rose gardens, visit us at

<http://www.rosegardensecrets.com/garden/>

and

<http://www.rosegardensecrets.com/garden/rosegardendesign/>

### **Why Rose Gardening Is So Addictive**

**By Chester Smith**

For many of us, the act of gardening brings us closer to nature by getting us outdoors and allowing us the opportunity to tend and grow objects that in the absence of our assistance would not be able to survive, let alone thrive. There is a special connection between the growers of roses and their plants, however, which seems to go even beyond the basic instincts of the traditional gardener.

The first reason that roses can be such an addictive plant is the roots it has in our culture in the form of myth and symbolism. The same reason we are addicted to rose gardening is the same reason we are willing to pay a ridiculous amount for a single flower or bunch on Valentine's Day— nothing in our society communicates more than the rose. This cultural phenomenon has been a part of western heritage for longer than anyone can trace. The rose was considered a flower of romance in ancient China, where it was first developed, and was used throughout the Roman Empire. British history is full of roses in every context— the theater where Shakespeare's plays were put on was known as the rose, and some of the most distinguishing events in British history occurred during the long "War of the Roses". Roses were not actually introduced to Europe in the cultivated style until the late 1700s, when they arrived from China.

Perhaps some of the addiction we have in cultivating roses stems in part from the same areas that our ancient forebears found so appealing. Many roses have a very distinctive scent, and the shape of the rose is certainly unique enough in itself to warrant extensive cultivation and appeal. Roses can also be found in many different colors and varieties, and there is symbolism attached to every colour that roses can be found in— red, of course, symbolizes love, but did you know that pink roses carry a message of gratitude, while yellow represent joy?

Roses also represent a singular species which can manifest itself in a variety of styles, and therefore a rose gardener really needs only to focus on rose types to bring all the variety to the appearance of her lawn and garden that could be wished for. Roses can be planted in the miniature style, as bushes, and

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as climbers. As has been noted above, roses are also available in several different colors which will add to the overall diversity in appearance of your garden. Roses are also available in petals of many different sizes to further add diversity to your landscaping. Species roses grow hips that are colorful and last well into the winter, and can add a further sprinkle of uniqueness to your landscaping by attracting birds throughout the winter months.

Lastly, roses require as little or as much attention as the gardener wants to put in. Pruned bushes look ideal, but roses are also beautiful when allowed to grow freely. Roses also tend to be very hardy and resistant to diseases. The soil composition needs not have too many considerations, and the ground cover is totally up to the gardener.

Growing roses can be an addicting experience because of their history, their beauty, their variety, and their maintenance. Once a person dedicates their garden space to the cultivation of roses, the possibilities are limitless.

Chester Smith maintains a website for rose gardening enthusiasts. It can be found at:

<http://roseblogs.com>



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