



How To ... Prune Roses In Spring

Of all the horticulture elements that can go into a landscape design, Roses seem to rank the most favorite. A rose is a perennial plant. Perennial plants grow and bloom over the spring and summer and then die back in the autumn and winter, then return in the spring from their root-stock. Roses, which come in a variety of colors, can be either a shrub or vine. Roses have an abundant variety of species growing all over the earth. No matter if your roses are shrubs or vines they need your attention ... especially in the spring.

The way to prune roses in the spring is to first look at the plant from several feet away and then up close. You will begin to notice that there is growth on the plant that is not necessary and will hinder the flowery show you can enjoy all summer long. Because the rose is a perennial and regenerates from its root-stock in the spring, you do not have to be afraid of cutting back the unwanted growth. You can even cut the plant all the way back to the ground to encourage vigorous growth.

What you need to notice is which branch or vine to cut. It is not unusual to cut 30% to 40% of the rose plant's branches and stems (also referred to as "cane") each year. Remove to the ground any dead cane. Remove crossing branches that may hinder flowers from opening. These crossing branches do not necessarily have to be cut to the ground - but by stepping back and looking at their direction you can usually tell where you want to prune the cane. Remember the entire object of pruning roses is to increase its flowery show and allowing the flower to expand to its full glory.

Some general pruning rules:

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| Miniature Roses | use either selective cane pruning or an overall "to-the-ground" pruning. |
| Groundcover Roses | use either selective cane pruning or an overall "to-the-ground" pruning. |
| Once-Blooming Roses | prune after their bloom period is done. |
| Climber Roses | remove spindly growth, heavy leafy canes, crossovers, keep newer canes, bend 2nd year canes and tie them to the shape (like an arch) you want. |
| Large Rose Shrubs | general pruning and bend 2nd year growth down into the shrub. |
| Hybrid Tea Roses | deadhead and prune until cool weather comes (late October or November). |
| Knock Out Roses | general pruning of messy canes - but otherwise you can leave them alone. |

Types of roses that can survive the climate variations of Chicago:

New Dawn ❖ William Baffin ❖ Davic Austins ❖ Knock Outs

Should you have any questions about pruning, please call the Tommy Pollina Landscape Company office and ask for one of our horticulturalist. (847) 698-6868.