



FROM: Karen Mezera , President of
THE MADISON ROSE SOCIETY

Hello,

It's finally that time of year we have been waiting for over the past 6 months or so. The Forsythia are in bloom and Tax day has come and gone so it's time to work on the roses!

PRUNING TIME

Most of us should be able to now safely pull the cover off our roses and start to prune. Cut into healthy green canes slightly above an outward facing swollen bud eye @ about A 45 degree angle. If there are lots of healthy canes on any type of rose, prune out old canes starting at the center and work your way out.

Hybrid teas benefit from being cut down to 12 inches or shorter. Most of the time I'm lucky if one has green 6 inches high, so I don't have to worry about that! Cut out all but 3-5 strong canes in general. Cut them off as close to the ground or bud union as possible, Cut so as to keep the center of the plant open to the air as much as possible. This helps prevent diseases.

Old Garden roses and polyanthas benefit from having large old brown dead canes cut back to the ground. Be sure they are dead first. Many roses bud out on old wood. Scratch the surface of the cane with your fingernail to check to see if there is green growth under the dark covering. Cut back long lanky canes to help shape the bush and promote new cane development. Thin out the middle on these bushes also for healthier , stronger growth. Cut back some of the side canes to help stimulate new growth.

Floribundas, and shrubs need the dead canes cut out also. Prune other canes back to a place before the branching out at the top of the bush occurs. Prune off most of the canes that have branched off the main canes. Keep the centers open.

Climbers can be left long . Remove last years secondary stems. Cut them back to where the healthy green cane starts. To promote bloom along the entire cane pull the canes down and fasten them or lay the canes on the ground til buds form, then put them back on their supports.

Prune large mini's back to 4 inches and small ones back to 2 inches. Trim out dead growth, open up the center and reduce the number of branching side canes by a third.

Don't be afraid to prune them back. It will make them stronger and healthier with more blooms! It's good for them!!! ☺

Rose that you think are dead might not be!!!! Leave them alone!!!! Water them!!! Keep them moist. Do not go digging around them!!!. They may send up new canes from the base of the bud union. If you poke around them it will break the new growth off. If there are no signs of growth by the first of June, then I usually give up on them. :(

Don't be sad! This is an opportunity to try a new rose! If it didn't live with all my tender loving care then it's not a rose that is meant to be grown in my garden!! Only the strong shall survive! That which does not kill us, makes us even stronger!!!

FERTILIZING

You can add dry soil amendments outside the drip line of your roses now. They like something with high nitrogen to start them off in the spring. This would be things like Blood Meal or Urea. It takes awhile for them to break down and get to your plants roots so it's OK to do it now.

DO NOT apply liquid chemical fertilizers now. For these you need to wait til the rose has become well leafed out.

You can add alfalfa meal or alfalfa pellets, Epsom salts, Greensand, Bone meal, Milorganite, Bob's mix , or Mills Magic Mix now also. Pretty much anything in dry organic form is OK.

Follow the labeling instructions for amounts to use.

When they have leafed out well, depending on your garden's individual needs, you can add Chelated Iron, Kelp and Fish meal to the soil. Then you can also start using the liquid fertilizers.

WIND PROTECTION

Spring winds can be harsh and drying to newly uncovered supple green canes. These canes can look great and dry out and die very quickly. Keep the canes and buds moist. I like to spray my canes with an anti desiccant after they are uncovered. I use Wilt Pruf, but there are plenty of others you can use.

MOISTURE

Roses love moisture. Keep the ground moist! Keep the leaves dry. Roses like at least 2 inches of water a week in my garden. If it's hot out , they want even more.

DISEASE PROTECTION

You can start your spray program on the canes when they are uncovered. When they leaf out be sure to spray the tops and undersides of the leaves.

If they had Blackspot or other fungal diseases last fall, start spraying now with Manzate or Mancozeb every 3 days for @ least 5 rotations to get rid of the spores. If you miss a 3 day stretch you need to start counting all over again to get best results.

If you didn't have any diseases in the fall just start your prevention spraying. I recommend alternating 2 systemics with a contact following the label directions

EXAMPLE

Week One. Systemic fungicide #1

Week 2, Contact fungicide. (I usually put some Manzate or Mancozeb in with this.)

Week 3. Systemic fungicide #2

Keep rotating throughout the season. Follow label directions. Some will say spray every 7 days , some 10 days and some 14 days.

PEST PREVENTION

I DON'T SPRAY FOR PESTS VERY OFTEN. If you spray regularly you will destroy the beneficial insect population and do more harm than good. I use a strong water wand and soapy water occasionally. I treat for infestations only when they are really bad and I wait til they show up before I do anything.

That's all for now! Check back in a few weeks for more tips!

