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## **SURVIVED ONE GRUELING SUMMER? WHAT'S NEXT IN OUR GARDENING ADVENTURES?**

COMPILED BY  
**KAREN GERLACH**  
**HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY**  
[HOUSTONROSE.ORG](http://HOUSTONROSE.ORG)

As weather cools, Fall is a great time to get out in the garden and assess where we are and where we want to go for the following year. In the Houston region, fall is a wonderful time to:

- Plant perennials. Plenty of time to let plants get established before our relatively mild winters.
- Regularly water if there is no rain in the forecast. We will still have fluctuating temperatures.
- Don't get frustrated if new plantings don't reach their expected "full size."
- Focus on root establishment during fall planting. When the plants bounce back after winter, they are more apt to go gangbusters! Remember, plants need to start a strong, healthy root system and the top growth will follow naturally!

### **PRUNING**

Some sources state you should be pruning your roses in the fall to encourage blooming. This is true, with the caveat this 'pruning' is nothing like the hard pruning we do in February.

The best way to describe this is you're giving your roses a "haircut" — **'SUSAN KELLY**, Consulting Rosarian. This is the time to trim dead branches or limbs encroaching on walkways. Some rosarians even time their pruning 35 to 45 days in advance of the Rose Shows!

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**101 Sherbrook Circle • Conroe, Tx 77385-7750**  
**(936) 321-6990 Metro • (936) 273-1200 Conroe**



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If you have never entered one, [Houston Rose Society](#) sponsors spring and fall shows. This is a great way to share the beauty of your garden and brighten someone's day. Who knows, you may even score some special prizes.

## MULCHING

August and September are great months to replenish that mulch layer about 3" thick — **GAYE HAMMOND**, Master Rosarian. The summer heat has caused spring-applied mulch to break down, a good thing as the breakdown products feed your plants and enrich your soil. Replenishing your mulch layer will lessen your watering frequency, help build your soil health, and help protect your plant's root system during freezes.

## FERTILIZING

We are approaching our last fertilizing cycle for the year in early September. **MARY FULGHAM**, Master Rosarian, says a granular fertilizer can be spread widely around the plant base. When we fertilize we are stimulating new plant growth. WARNING: if we fertilize, say in November, -- just an example and please do not do this! -- all the new, tender growth will be more susceptible to freeze damage come December and January.

The big annual Houston Rose Society Fall Show & Sale dates have not yet been announced. Check [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org) for updates. In the meantime . . .

At the Thurs., Sept. 8: Houston Rose Society meeting, 7pm, Mark Windham, Ph.D., retired Distinguished Professor of Ornamental Pathology at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville. will discuss safety with treatments in the garden. <https://meet.goto.com/614327597>. Details: See calendar or log on: [houstonrose.org/hrsmeet.htm](http://houstonrose.org/hrsmeet.htm).

KAREN GERLACH, Consulting Rosarian and Master Gardener points out how, after going through loads of "science school," she enjoys learning how to use science to understand and explain her late grandmother's "gardening magic."

[\(KAREN's full article:urbanharvest.org/2022/08/31/insectary-gardens/\)](http://urbanharvest.org/2022/08/31/insectary-gardens/)

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