



"It Is As Hot As H_____"

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The roses seem to handle the heat much better than I do; at least they don't show sweat and need to have their clothes washed every evening.

Since there is so much insolation (sunshine) the roses can grow to their potential size . . . as long as they are fed and sufficiently hydrated (watered) . . . and their leaves are kept intact. Note: All successful rose growing is a function of healthy leaflets - no leaflets, no good growth.

There are some little tricks that you can employ to make things grow better.

1. Water regularly. A full-grown Hybrid Tea bush will aspirate about 5 gallons of water a week. That translates to 1-inch of water in each 3' x 3' space in the rose bed. Bury an open cat-food can even with the top of the mulch, and if it is full at the end of your watering cycle, you have done it right.
2. Cut spent blooms away. Make the cuts at the cane diameter that you wish the next growth to be. To support a large bloom, you will need a ¼-inch stem. Otherwise, cut it off. Make the cut 1/8-inch above the second or third 5-leaflet leaf below the old bloom --- longer than 1/8-inch will likely cause dieback. Remove the first two leaflets, leaving the next two and the one at the end of the leaf (to) help it to form a new growth.
3. Watch for three stems. If three new stems come from the same cut, snap the outer two away using your fingernail (to) make it larger. If all three are left, the center one will almost always be smaller and weaker than the outer ones.
4. Remove blind shoots. Little clusters of leaflets (sometimes 5 or 6 on almost no stem at all) will never bear a flower, often contract blackspot, harbor insect pests and shade more-productive leafs so that less good growth occurs.



5. Remove suckers. Growths from the shank below the bud union are from the rootstock, not the variety that will give the blooms for which you hope. They will draw energy from bloom stems. Break them off. Damage at that location helps stop new suckers.
6. Don't forget to feed.
7. Add mulch. First broadcast some alfalfa pellets around the rose plants to give the earthworms a treat - they love that stuff!
8. Remove dead canes. Especially at the bud union. Don't leave stubs. Apply White Glue (Elmer's?) to seal the cut surface to prevent deterioration. Canes up in the plant do not need to be sealed.
9. Remove seed pods. Seed pods will slow down the formation of new blooms, and new growth will attempt to come from that location on the plant, which might not be where you would wish it to form.
10. Remove older canes, favoring new ones. New canes have the smooth, green bark. Old canes usually have grey or streaked bark, and seldom produce new growths of best size.
11. KEEP LEAVES ON THE BUSH! When the leaf falls off, the bush must derive replacement leaf growth from its internal energy. But that energy should have been used to produce new blooms, so the bloom cycle is compromised. For healthy and productive bushes, get rid of blackspot. A blackspotted leaflet is a doomed leaflet.