



Above, pruning sketches from the [American Rose Society Website](#) advice.

Below, Baxter and, at right, a part of the 500+ rose garden he and wife Patsy have created in Pasadena.

EVEN SEASONED ROSE GARDENERS MAKE PRUNING MISTAKES . . .

by Baxter Williams
[Houston Rose Society](#)

"Even seasoned rose gardeners make pruning mistakes, albeit few. Here are the likely ones.

1. Using unsharpened shears. Sharp shears are MUCH easier to use, and do less harm to the remaining canes.
2. Leaving more than 1/4-inch above the selected node, which excess will likely result in dieback. Actually, 1/8-inch is better.
3. Cutting to a small diameter stem. If you want the new growth to be strong enough to support a large stem and bloom, you should cut to a pencil-sized stem or larger; smaller ones cause smaller, weaker stems, and smaller blooms.



4. Leaving cane stubs at the bud union where a cane has been removed. Cuts at the bud union should always be flush with the surface.
5. Forgetting to protect your just-pruned rose bush against fungus diseases.
6. Leaving diseased (black-spotted) leaves on the bush. The fungus spores on those leaflets will spread to others on that bush, and to adjacent bushes, and to neighbors' bushes.
7. Listening to false advice, such as always disinfecting after each cut, and making each cut at a 45-degree angle.
8. Forgetting to have fun while doing the work."

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Baxter can be emailed at bxtwms@att.net.