

A Rose Garden of Your Own



A ROSE garden is the fond hope of every householder, for there is nothing so expressive of home, of permanency, as a garden of roses. The most important thing is the location of your garden and the composition of the soil. The ground must not be shaded, although partially shaded ground will not be so bad. You should have a rich soil; in the absence of that, you can build up your soil in the course of one winter so that it will give surprising results.

In my own case, I had nothing except a clay bank to start with. This was due to the fact that in making an excavation for a cellar the clay had been piled up on top of the natural loam. The ground would not even support a good growth of lawn grass.

Preparing the Soil

IN THE fall, long before freezing weather, this ground was spaded up thoroughly to the depth of an ordinary garden spade. The dirt was thrown up loosely and no attempt was made to smooth it off or break up the particles, as we wanted the winter frosts to get in all the action possible. Throughout the winter, poultry droppings and the litter—which was largely composed of straw and leaves—was thrown on top of this spaded ground. Quite a bit of fertility from the leaching of the droppings thus went right into the ground.

Early in the spring, as soon as it was possible to spade the ground, we took a garden fork and forked under all the litter and droppings. The ground was then allowed to remain idle again until in April, when all danger of frost was over and it was possible to set out our rosebushes.

By these means we had broken up the consistency of the clay and had enriched the ground to such an extent that it was extremely fertile for the roses. In fact, the amount of available plant food prepared for the bushes before they were ever put in the ground was astonishing, to say the least.

We had meantime been learning all we could concerning the different varieties of roses, their habits and demands, so that we had determined just what varieties would be most likely to succeed in our locality.

Selecting the Varieties

THE success of a rose garden depends more upon finding out what varieties of roses will do well in your community than upon almost anything else, for there are some varieties suited for each climate and some that will prove a dismal failure. We are speaking now of outdoor culture and assume that the bushes are to be left out the year around.

In our own case, we determined to stick to the hardy perpetuals, as they seemed best suited to our conditions. There are enough shades of color and types among the hardy perpetuals to satisfy the most exacting whim, and they come in all sizes from small-growing bushes to those reaching six and seven feet in height. As to colors, from the brilliant crimson of the General Jacqueminot to the delicate flesh color of Clio, there isn't a better variety of color to be found anywhere in the rose world.

The hardy perpetuals will winter anywhere in the North, with reasonable protection, and they will bloom season after season with the minimum of care and attention. Of course, if you live in the South you can go in for all the tea roses and their variations and can grow almost any rose listed in the catalogues; but if you want a reasonable assurance of success the first

By Chesla C. Sherlock

year, and most beginners do, the hardy perpetuals are the ones to grow.

The American Beauty belongs to this class, and of all of them we liked the Frau Karl Druschki or the White American Beauty the best. It is a pure snow white, has long buds and perfectly double flowers, often as much as five inches across. It blooms all summer and fall, having a mass of bloom in June and again in September. The General Jacqueminot is a wonderful double crimson rose, very deep in color and a profuse bloomer. The bush often reaches six feet in height and will be a mass of long-stemmed big blooms. It is extremely hardy and a favorite in all rose gardens. The J. B. Clark is another favorite. It is a deep, intense scarlet, running to a blackish crimson. It, also, is a hardy bush.

For the lover of yellow roses, the nearest approach to this color in the hardy perpetuals is found in the Gloire Lyonnaise, which achieves a pale lemon color. It has a very strong bush and few thorns.

The Paul Neyron is the best pink rose in this class and it has been claimed that it is the largest rose grown, often reaching six inches across. It is a hardy grower and a favorite everywhere. The Ulrich Brunner is a brilliant cherry red in color and a great favorite in many gardens. The Clio is a delicate flesh color and a sturdy grower.

Good Varieties for Northern Climates

IF YOU live in a milder climate you may want to try the hybrid teas. Here you will find the famous Killarneys the most popular, with La France varieties a close contender. These roses are also grown in more northern climates successfully with slight winter care.

Where it is desired to succeed with the tea roses, Rugosa roses and their hybrids will come nearer meeting climatic conditions than any other. The Rugosa roses are tough and hardy and make exceedingly large bushes, ranging from six to nine feet in height. They are not only good for bloom, but make excellent shrubs as well.

The favorite in this class is the Conrad F. Meyer, a tea Rugosa. It is a silvery rose color and perfectly double. The Sir Thomas Lipton is another variation of white in this class. The Alice Aldrich is a bright, clear pink and one of the best for garden planting.

The climbing roses will generally succeed in most climates if you are careful to protect the roots and select a conservative variety. The climbing American Beauties and the famous Ramblers are the general favorites.

For small-growing border effects around beds of larger-growing shrubs, there is nothing better than the baby roses or Polyantha, sometimes called Baby Ramblers. They seldom grow over a foot high and are a solid mass of wonderful little blooms.

The most important thing in ordering the roses is to be sure to get hardy, healthy

bushes. This means that you will have to order them from a trustworthy rose grower or nurseryman and preferably one in your own locality, as his stock should be acclimated to your own conditions. It is not best to order one-year plants at any time. It is better, in the interests of successful growth, to get two-year plants, if possible, and three-year-olds by preference.

General Rules for Planting Roses

THE time to plant varies in the different sections of the country, but for the central United States the best time is in April, just before the hard-soaking spring rains set in. If you get the bushes in after the heavy rains you will never be able to make up for the lost advantage. It is not the moisture alone that counts. The hard rains pack the soil down close around the roots and allow the little, hairlike roots to get the plant food quickly and support the bush while the larger roots are getting established. Without this aid it is impossible to get the soil around the roots, and the circulation of air around the tiny roots dries them up and makes it all the harder for the bush to survive, indeed; often condemning it to die.

If your ground has been thoroughly prepared, as already suggested, it will be possible to set in the bushes the minute they arrive from the nurseryman, even though the ground is too wet to work; while if you have waited to prepare the ground until the bushes arrive and it is too wet to work, you are simply "out of luck," as the expression goes. Set them out in the evening and allow plenty of room between the bushes. It will be well to remember that they will grow up to a good height, especially the hardy perpetuals, and will branch out more or less. At least three feet each way is necessary and four feet would be better.

The young rosebushes should be set down so that the crown is level with the surface of the soil. By looking at the bush you can see just how deep it was set the year before by the soil marks on the canes. Set it just a trifle deeper, if possible. The roots should not be cramped in the ground, but should be spread out as much as possible and should be well watered. After firming down the soil well around the roots, give it at least a gallon of water, in order to settle the soil as much as possible, and fill up the cavity made by this water so that the soil is slightly higher around the bush than the surrounding level of ground.

If the bushes have not been set out until after the spring rains, say in May, it will be necessary to give them a thorough watering every night. This does not mean merely a little wetting with a hose; it means at least a gallon of water to each bush, until the leaves show up and they commence to make a healthy growth.

Summer Care of Rosebushes

IF THE ground has been prepared during the previous fall, or if you have naturally mellow and rich ground, it will not be necessary to pay any attention to plant food the first summer. It is necessary, however, to keep the ground mellow and loose. It should never get hard, nor should weeds be allowed.

We ourselves solve this problem by simply using a garden rake on the rose beds twice a week. After every rain the soil is thoroughly raked and leveled off. This keeps the weeds out, mellow the ground and prevents it getting hard and at the same time saves all the moisture for the use of the bushes.



There is Nothing So Expressive of Home as a Garden of Roses



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The blooms should be picked just at the time the buds start to open. Use a pair of scissors and cut the stem down close to the branch from which it springs. By picking early this way you conserve the strength of the bush and at the same time encourage it to bloom in even greater profusion.

Where it is desired to encourage a good growth in the bush the first season or two, all buds should be pinched off so as to encourage growth more than the bloom. Both cannot be successfully carried on at the same time.

Spraying and Pruning

THE fact that roses are assailed by a multitude of pests has led many people to give up trying to raise them in their gardens. It really is not a hard job to put these pests to flight; it will require only a few minutes and very slight expense.

The pests are not confined to insects alone; the most persistent are fungus growths of various kinds. For the insects we have found nicotine sulphate, which can be had at any seed house, to be the best. It generally comes in concentrated liquid form, requiring about a teaspoonful of the mixture to a gallon of water.

Get a spray pump or a hand spray, and give the bushes a thorough spraying about the middle of May, whether any insects are present or not, and repeat in about ten days. At the first sign of insects or aphids spray and repeat again in ten days to catch any that might have hatched in the interval.

For fungus growths there are many sprays that will answer well, but few are as successful as Bordeaux mixture. It can be procured at any seed house and should be mixed in an earthenware receptacle. After spraying, thoroughly clean out the inside of your pump, especially if you have a cheap hand spray, otherwise the material will eat it full of holes. Fungus growths take on many different aspects, but generally are distinguished by the appearance of mildew on the leaves, or of tiny spots.

Later the leaves will curl and drop off without any apparent cause. As soon as any evidence of mildew appears the spraying apparatus should be got out.

It is best not to spray in the heat of the day, but to wait until evening or on a cloudy day. And care must be taken to cover thoroughly every leaf and twig, on the under side as well as on the upper side, especially when you are after aphids or fungus diseases.

The roses are persistent growers and will continue to send out new shoots and grow new leaves until killing frosts come. The beauty of the bush will have to be regulated

by the grower by means of a judicious use of the pruning shears.

After the bushes have stopped growing in the fall and are dormant it is best to prune the roses thoroughly. There is no advantage in waiting until the spring, and often a severe disadvantage is encountered in affording that much more of a hiding place for pests, especially if there happen to be dead canes on the bushes.

In cold climates the dead wood only is removed in the fall. In the spring the pruning to be done is regulated according to the object one has in mind. If large blooms are desired it will be necessary to prune more severely than where a mass of smaller blooms is desired, as the more blooms the bush produces the relatively smaller they will be. Pruning is done as soon as freezing weather is over, and it is best to leave only five or six eyes on a stem.

The pruning also has a tendency to improve the appearance of the bushes, keeping them more compact and neater in appearance. Where it is not done they will be ungainly and awkward in appearance and will not amount to much in a season or two of neglect, for the roots will be unable to carry the burden of supplying all the eyes with sufficient sap to make desirable blooms.

Where the pruning has been overdone the tendency is for the strength all to go to growth rather than to bloom.

Fall and Winter Care

THE fall and winter care will determine whether you are to have permanent success with your rose venture. It is necessary to protect the roots from the frosts and prevent the heaving of them by this great enemy of shrub life. As soon as the leaves fall begin to pull loose dirt up around the crown of the bush and gradually continue it as the weather gets colder until you have ridged them up six or eight inches. This will be sufficient protection, unless you happen to be where it gets unusually cold.

The best plan is then to mulch them with good clean straw or leaves and to put something over the mulch to prevent it blowing away. A light mulch is to be recommended even in warmer climates, but care must be taken not to use too much. A good rule to follow is to mulch them just as you would your strawberries in the same locality. This will insure you roses the next spring and throughout the years that will make your dream of a garden of roses a living reality. They are so responsive to even the most casual attention, when correct in principle, that there is no reason why every garden should not be a garden of roses.