

Planting Roses

By Bill Kozemchak

Best time for planting is early spring when the soil is workable and temperature mild. Late autumn is also a good time.

Roses require at least 4-5 hours of sunlight a day to produce all the sugar and protein they need. Six hours is ideal.

Location should be well drained, roses don't like wet feet. A deeply dug, well prepared hole will usually provide this.

Bare root roses should not dry out. Soak them for several hours when they arrive. This will properly hydrate them.

Preparing planting holes in the fall will make spring planting easier.

Dig the hole 18 inches in diameter and 20 inches deep. Soil can be amended with organics, aged compost, gypsum and, or sand for clay soils, or topsoil or clay for sandy soils.

Trim any broken or overly long roots before planting. Do not stuff long roots in the hole by spiraling them around the hole. Roots 8-10 inches long are sufficient.

Put no nitrogen fertilizer in the planting hole. Bone meal or super phosphate will promote root growth.

Bud union location depends on climate. In the Mid-Atlantic area it is usually at or near soil level.

Do not stomp on the soil after planting; let the water settle the soil.

Mound the excess soil around the newly planted bush to prevent it from drying until the roots are established. A height of six inches should be sufficient. This can be removed gradually as the rose becomes established.

Mulching will help the soil retain moisture and keep the soil cooler. The temperature may be 10-15 degrees cooler than without the mulch. It should be 2-4 inches thick.