

Roses for North Carolina

Introduction

Sooner or later most home gardeners think about growing roses. Landscape uses are quite varied because of the many different types of roses. They can be mass planted in beds, used as specimen or trained plants, planted as screens or hedges, or located near fences or arbors and allowed to climb. Several miniature cultivars can even be used as a ground cover or as edging material. Roses are available in almost any color imaginable and are suited to a number of sites.

Performances of different types of roses should be evaluated. The most common classifications of modern roses today are hybrid tea, floribunda, grandiflora, climber, miniature and shrub roses. These descended in part from eight species of roses which came to Europe from Asia in the 16th century. They became the modern hybrids, principally because they were able to bloom repeatedly throughout the growing season. Most of the other species only bloom once, in June or July.

Hybrid Teas are the most popular garden roses. They are results of interbreeding the hybrid perpetual with tea rose cultivars. Hybrid tea roses are typically characterized as bush form with large flowers, borne singly or in small clusters on a stem. Hybrid tea plants are quite hardy across North Carolina, and bloom throughout the summer and fall until frost.

Floribunda roses are a result of crossing Polyantha with hybrid tea varieties during the early 20th century. Generally, they have smaller flowers than hybrid teas, but produce more flowers on each stem. Floribundas are usually low-growing, densely branched bushes which are quite adaptable to many landscape uses. Colors range from snowy white to deep crimson.

Grandiflora roses originated by crossing hybrid tea and floribunda roses. The resulting rose is quite vigorous, and produces larger, but fewer flowers than the floribunda.

Climbing roses originated by crossing species roses with several other cultivars. While no rose is a true climber, having no means of gripping or attaching itself to a support, this rose sends out long shoots or canes which can be trained over fences, arbors, or trellises. Because of the wide genetic background, climbers have quite a variation of characteristics. Some bloom only once, while others bloom continuously. Some have large, hybrid tea type blooms, while others bloom in small clusters.

Miniature roses have become quite popular with home gardeners in the last 10-15 years. The plants are small in stature, ranging in height from 3 to 12 inches, and have small buds, stems, foliage, and flowers. Several species are popular as both outdoor landscape plants and indoor potted plants. Miniature roses are available in a wide range of colors. They are hardy in most of North Carolina.

Shrub roses generally don't fit well in any of the previously mentioned classes. They have a varied genetic background but are characterized by the bushy, shrub-like form. Shrub roses are vigorous, hardy, and are adapted to a wide landscape use.

Culture and Care of Roses

Site Selection: Roses should be planted where they receive 6-8 hours of full sunlight each day. The ideal site is one which offers full sun early in the morning, and late afternoon shade. This will allow foliage and buds to dry early in the day which will discourage diseases. Shade in the afternoon will encourage the development of good flower color. The area should be relatively open, allowing for good air circulation. The site ideally should be located away from fruit trees and vegetable gardens as the numbers of insect and disease problems will be compounded if roses are located near these areas.

Soils: Just about any soil in North Carolina will require either physical or chemical amendments before planting, so one can do a thorough job. Roses require good drainage. To provide this characteristic it might be necessary to prepare a 'raised bed.' Extreme cases may require the addition of drainage tile to carry away

excess water. Since roses are expected to last several years one should take extra time and effort in bed preparation. The soil should be tilled to a depth of 8-12 inches with lime added to adjust the pH up to the 5.5 or 6 range. Various forms of sulfur can be added to lower the pH of alkaline soils. Organic matter such as decayed sawdust, pine bark, compost or manure may be added to soils to improve the tilth.

Planting: For best results planting should be done in the early spring or in the fall. [Roses at the highest elevations in the mountains (> 3500' elevation) should normally be spring planted.] If individual roses are to be planted, the hole should be large enough so roots can be spread out in the hole. A good plant will require a hole 12 inches deep and 18 inches wide. Broken roots should be pruned and the top portion cut back to 5-7 inches. Before putting soil back around the roots be sure roots are loose and not pot bound. The backfill should contain native soil and not just prepared media. Roots then will grow out into the native soil and provide a better moisture relationship. Plants should be mounded slightly higher than "grade level." The soil should be tamped down to eliminate any air pockets. Watering during planting will also aid in this step.

Mulch: As in any landscape planting, mulch will provide aid during stress periods. Holding moisture, discouraging weeds, and preventing soil crusting, are a few added benefits of a 3-4" inch layer of organic matter. Disease problems can be decreased if the mulch is replaced each spring.

Fertilization: A tendency for many new rose growers is to over-fertilize newly planted roses. Generally speaking, a commercial grade 10-10-10 or 8-8-8 fertilizer at the rate of 2-3 lbs per 100 square feet is adequate. This can be applied in 2 applications early in the growing season. The addition of cow manure as a supplement is also advised. When the buds begin to form, apply another application of 10-10-10 or equivalent at the rate of 1-2 lbs/100 square feet. Repeat this application every 4 weeks or until mid-August.

Watering: When rose plants don't get a weekly soaking by natural rainfall, supplemental irrigation will be necessary. Typical North Carolina summers require this extra irrigation. An excellent system would be the soaker hose. This provides

moisture to the root system while keeping foliage dry. If an overhead system is used, a morning irrigation would be recommended as the foliage would have time to dry, and lessen the possibilities of black spot or powdery mildew infections.

Pruning: Pruning could be one of the most important and necessary steps in growing roses. Correct pruning will improve the overall shape, promote new, healthier growth, and eliminate dead, broken, or diseased canes. Most of the annual pruning in North Carolina should be done in the spring, just as the buds break dormancy. [This could be late February on Emerald Isle or late April in Laurel Springs.] The most important thing is to look at the buds. The gardener who prunes too early will gamble future growth to frost, and one who prunes too late will have a plant weakened by loss of sap. So watch for the buds: when they begin to swell, go ahead and prune. Spring pruning also allows for removal of wood which was damaged by the winter. This is helpful in the overall shaping of the rose. The height of the plant can be controlled by pruning, and even after a severe pruning new canes will usually grow to the desired height.

Sharp pruning shears are necessary. Pruning cuts should be clean and at a slant. The wood should be removed about 1/4 inch above an outside bud. Be sure to cut a cane down to a point where the cross-section shows no sign of discoloration. Periodically dip the pruning shears in a 70% alcohol solution to decrease spread of disease organisms. Tree roses are pruned primarily for shape, thus requiring severe pruning cuts. Climbers are pruned according to class. The spring flowering ramblers are pruned immediately after blooming. The old wood is removed to stimulate new growth which will flower the next year. Many climbers are pruned to be kept within a basic boundary with the older canes pruned. Corrective pruning and pruning diseased canes should be done as soon as necessary.

The rewards for all this work can be beautiful flowers which can be cut and also enjoyed inside. Care should be taken not to damage rose canes when flowers are removed. First year roses should be allowed to bloom and not received continuous cutting. After the rose bush matures the flowers can be cut regularly.

It is not possible to list all the cultivars of roses on the market today, but the most popular are listed. Before making a selection, research the hardiness for your

particular area in rose catalogues and check descriptions and ratings of the "All America" winners.

Hybrid teas

Americana - red	Invitation - salmon-pink
American Heritage - salmon blend becoming salmon	John F. Kennedy - white
Apollo - yellow	King's Ransom - yellow
Arizona - copper	Matterhorn - white
Arlene Frances - yellow	Medallion - apricot
Bahia - orange blend	Miss All American Beauty - pink
Bewitched - phlox-pink	Mister Lincoln - dark red
Big Red - red	Mojave - apricot-orange
Blanche Mallerin - white	New Yorker - bright scarlet
Bon Bon - rose-pink	Nocturne - cardinal-red
Candy Stripe - pink	Oregold - lemon-yellow
Charlotte Armstrong - reds	Pascali - creamy white
Chicago Peach - phlox-pink	Peace - yellow
Christian Dior - crimson	Perfume Delight - pink
Chrysler Imperial - crimson red	Pink Peace - deep pink
Confidence - light pink	Polynesian Sunset - coral-orange
Command Performance - orange-red	Portrait - creamy white
Crimson Glory - crimson	Rose Parade - light coral-pink
Eclipse - golden yellow	Royal Highness - light pink
Eiffel Tower - medium pink	Show Girl - rose-pink
Electron - rose-pink	Sincera - pure white
First Prize - pink blend	Summer Sunshine - deep yellow
Fragrant Cloud - coral red	Sutter's Gold - golden orange
Garden Party - yellow to white	Tiffany - pink
Granada - rose, red & lemon yellow	Tropicana - coral-orange
Gypsy - fiery orange-red	War Dance - orange red
Hawaii - orange-coral	White Knight - clear white
Helen Traubel - pink	World's Fair Salute - crimson-red

Floribunda

Angel Face - rich lavender	Gene Boerner - soft pink
Apricot Nectar - pink-apricot	Golden Slippers - yellow
Betty Prior - pink	Heat Wave - orange-scarlet
Circus - yellow marked pink	Ivory Fashion - ivory-white
Europeana - dark crimson	Lavender Girl - rosy purple
Fashion - coral-peach	Pinocchio - salmon
Fire King - scarlet	Rumba - red, center yellow
Floradora - red	Saratoga - white
Fusilier - orange-scarlet	Spartan - orange-red
Gay Princess - soft pink	The Farmer's Wife - sunrise pink

Grandiflora

Aquarius - light pink	Montezuma - orange-red
Camelot - shrimp pink	Ole - red
Comanche - orange-red	Pink Parfait - light pink
Golden Girl - golden yellow dawn	Queen Elizabeth - rose and pink
John S. Armstrong - red	Scarlet Knight - scarlet-crimson
Lucky Lady - clear pink	

Climbing Roses

Don Juan - dark red	Royal Sunset - apricot blend
New Dawn - light pink	Sunday Best - red blend
Blaze - medium red	Blossomtime - medium pink
Climbing Tropicana - orange blend	White Dawn - white
Golden Showers - medium yellow	Iceland Queen - white

Miniature Roses

Baby Darling - orange
blend

Pixie Rose - deep pink

Beauty Secret - red

Little Buckeroo - medium
red

Bo-Peep - medium pink

Mary Marshall - orange

Candy Cane - red blend

Toy Clown - red

Cinderella - white

Tinker Bell - medium pink

Debbie - yellow blend

Scarlet Gem - orange

Marilyn - light pink

Shrub Roses

Sea Foam - white

Harrison's Yellow - yellow

The Fairy - pink

Pink Grootendorst - pink

Sarah Van Fleet -
pink

Parkdirector Riggers - red

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