

Growing Tips for Earth-Kind® Roses

For these roses to be as carefree as promised, it is crucial that they receive the following basic *care*:

Planting Site

- Plant in locations where roses receive full, direct sunlight for **at least eight hours** each day.
- Choose a location that provides good air movement over the leaves and do not plant too close together or place in cramped, enclosed areas.
- When a plant is fully grown, there should remain at least one foot of open space all around it to facilitate good air movement. This practice will help reduce the potential for foliar diseases.

Bed Preparation

- Roses respond well to soils with an adequate balance of aeration, drainage, and water holding characteristics.
- For clay soils, consider a one-time incorporation of 3 inches of expanded shale to improve soil aeration, drainage and to make the soil much easier to work. Then incorporate 3 inches of fully decomposed, plant-derived compost. Thoroughly mix the existing soil, expanded shale, and compost into a uniform planting medium. If necessary due to lack of availability or cost, compost can be used as an alternative to expanded shale.
- For clay soils, it is also beneficial to create raised beds, crowned (i.e. higher) in the center, to promote drainage.
- For sandy and loam soils, incorporate 3-6 inches of fully decomposed, plant-derived compost.
- Regardless of soil type, roses benefit from a year-round, 3-inch layer of organic mulch (e.g. tree limbs, with leaves, that have been run through a chipper) that conserves water, reduces weeds, reduces soil-borne plant diseases, moderates soil temperatures, and provides nutrients as it decomposes.

Maintenance

- Water thoroughly whenever the soil is dry in the root zone to a depth of one inch.
- Watering established plants too frequently can promote root disease, especially in poorly drained soils.
- Roses should not be sprinkler irrigated, especially during evening hours or at night. Drip irrigation is a much better watering method for plant health and water conservation.
- In areas with “salty” water, drip irrigation is needed to eliminate burning of the rose foliage due to salty irrigation spray.
- Follow recommended plant spacing and pruning practices. Remove dead, diseased, or broken branches to help promote plant health.
- Replenish the mulch as needed to maintain the 3-inch layer. Remember as the mulch decomposes, it provides nutrients for plant use.
- In most loam or clay soils (other than perhaps in desert areas) if you follow our Earth-Kind compost and mulch only approach to soil management, then commercial synthetic or organic fertilizers are not required. This is yet another major environmental victory for Earth-Kind.