

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Time to prune roses



A bouquet of red roses for your Valentine.

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Since the goal of climbing and rambling roses is to climb and cover a pergola, fence, or other structure, only light pruning is necessary. Flowers are produced on side shoots which can be reduced to three or four buds, depending on the appearance you wish. If you must choose between cutting out an old shoot or a new shoot, always prune the old and save the new.

Many of the Old Roses like Gallicas, Damasks, and Albas that only bloom once will only flower on shoots from stems that are at least a year old. If you prune once-flowering roses too heavily, you will have no flowers. When they are 5 or 6 years old with tired-looking stems, you can cut them out to encourage new growth and flowering.

After you have pruned, offer the healthy canes of non-trademarked species to friends and neighbors who would like to begin propagating roses. Or cultivate a new rose garden for yourself by dipping the canes in a rooting hormone then planting in a container with good quality potting soil. Clean up any leftover stems, remove leaves from the bushes, and add to the compost pile.

To add to your collection of roses, purchasing bare root and planting in February is a cost-saving way to go that will yield blooms in late spring. Once you've brought your bare roots home, soak them in a bucket of water overnight and then allow them to drain for 30 minutes before planting. Never allow the roots to dry out. Check the roots for any damage and trim as nec-

essary. If the roots look good, do not trim or cut.

Roses thrive in humus-rich, water-retentive soil with a pH of 6.5. Choose a bright, sunny location void of competition for root space, water, and nutrients. Improve the soil with rotted manure and compost and dig a generous size hole. Read directions on the package to determine the optimum hole size. Augment with mycorrhizal fungi to improve water supply and nutrients. Plant the bud union two inches below ground level. Water well. In spring, you'll want to add a layer of mulch or compost around each plant and fertilize the roses. Companion plant with lavender to encourage beneficial insects to be on pest patrol.

Your roses will be lush, blooming, and beautiful just in time for barbecues and patio parties. By Mother's Day, you'll be picking bouquets. Instead of buying cut roses for Valentine's Day, consider giving the gift of a potted rose plant. Miniatures make great gifts.

Now, back to pruning my roses because I do it pretty well, too!

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing. Happy Valentine's.



For a true red rose, try Mr. Lincoln.



For healthy, no fuss consistent blooms, Tournament of Roses is a winner.



**Cynthia Brian
in her office.**

Cynthia Brian, The Goddess Gardener, is available for hire to help you prepare for your spring garden. Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Buy copies of her books, including, *Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul*, *Growing with the Goddess Gardener*, and *Be the Star You Are!* www.cynthiabrian.com/online-store. Receive a FREE inspirational music DVD and special savings. Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com www.GoddessGardener.com