

PATERSON ALLYN GARDEN GROUP
Barbaras' Winter 2019 Rose Notes

PRUNING ROSES is usually done during July. In frost prone areas is better to prune at the end of July.

REQUIREMENTS: Sharp secateurs, long handled secateurs, protective gloves. If the bushes have thick wood, a chain saw or pruning saw may be needed.

TO BEGIN: Look at the base of your bush and follow each basal cane to ascertain the amount of dead or unproductive wood that appears on each individual cane. If unproductive wood takes up to two-thirds of the cane – remove the cane at the bud union (where the rose has been grafted onto root-stock). Cut out at the base and remove from the bush. Depending on the age and variety of rose, the optimum is leaving 2 to 6 healthy canes.

THE REMAINING HEALTHY CANES: shorten back to wood the thickness of a pencil with a slanted cut just above an outgrowing eye. For disease control, it is better to encourage new growth away from the centre of the bush, creating a dense centre which can damage foliage and blooms.

REMOVE ALL LEAVES by brushing off the canes, if any leaves remain attached to the canes cut them about one centimetre. up the leaf stalk as they are protecting an immature bud eye. Spray the canes with white oil to remove scale. Often an old toothbrush or washing-up brush is required to remove these white, super-sucking insects that look like white specks. It is necessary to do this within three days after pruning, otherwise scrubbing will damage the emerging new shoots.

TIDY-UP your rose beds by removing spent prunings, fallen leaves, weeds or trim-back boarder plants. Rose roots are fine and do not tolerate strong competitive roots.

LIGHTLY SCARIFY the surrounding soil and apply dolomite and lightly water in. Leave for a few days to allow the dolomite to act on the soil, then cover the whole area with mulch to a depth that is level with the base of each rose's bud union. Mulch can be fallen deciduous leaves, sugar cane mulch, spent hay etc. Be wary of weed seeds contained in the mulch. Wood-chip or forest mulches which contain pieces of wood are unsuitable for roses. Animal manures can be applied on top of the mulch.

FERTILIZE during the first week of October, applying a hand-full of No.17 or complete fertilizer (high in potash or potassium-K) onto damp soil. Then increase weekly watering. Mulch can also be topped up to cover the bud union so encouraging basal water shoots.