

CARING FOR YOUR ROSES

If you've ever googled how to look after your roses you'll have found:

- lots of conflicting information
- super specific and very confusing instructions and pictures
- wildly different opinions on when to prune
- information about good bugs and bad bugs
- when to spray, when not to spray - and what to spray with!

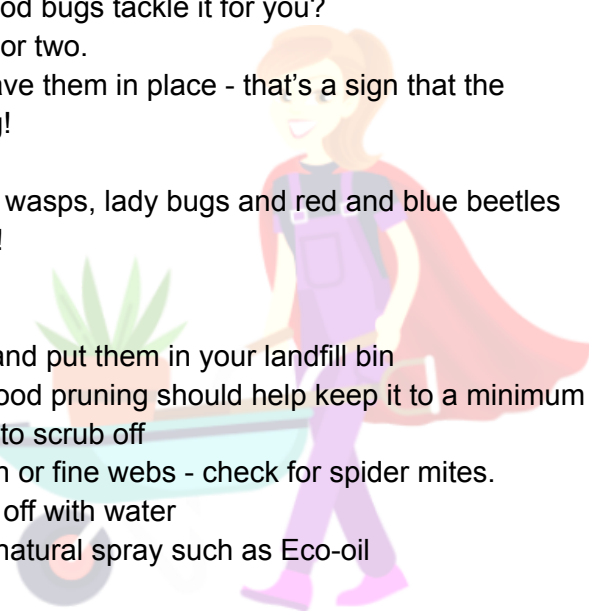
AH!!! How is anyone really supposed to know? We don't profess to have ALL the answers to everything, BUT we can share with you what we have learnt in our rose pruning journeys...

HEALTHY SOIL

- fertilise to improve your rose soil in Spring, early Summer and early Autumn
- healthy plants are less prone to pests and diseases
- the key to healthy plants is healthy soil
- we prefer natural/organic soil amendments to keep soils healthy:
 - compost, manure and blood & bone are great
 - apply regularly and generously
 - follow up with mulch to keep the water in and the weeds down
- fertiliser pellets and liquids specific for roses are also available. Always follow the instructions - it is definitely possible to over fertilise your garden!

SUMMER CARE

- monitor for pests and diseases and assess if any action is required
 - **Aphids** - how bad is it? Can the good bugs tackle it for you?
 - Leave small infestations for a week or two.
 - If you see any 'mummy aphids' - leave them in place - that's a sign that the parasitic wasps are doing their thing!
- monitor for **good bugs**:
 - hoverfly larvae, lacewings, parasitic wasps, lady bugs and red and blue beetles
 - these guys eat Aphids for breakfast!
- **Black Spot**
 - prune out any affected leaves
 - don't compost them - bag them up and put them in your landfill bin
 - chemical sprays are available but good pruning should help keep it to a minimum
- **White Rose Scale** - use an old toothbrush to scrub off
- **Spider Mites** - if you see leaf discolouration or fine webs - check for spider mites.
 - smaller infestations can be sprayed off with water
 - for larger infestations you can try a natural spray such as Eco-oil



WINTER CARE

- everyone has a different view on when the hard pruning should be done
 - some people have a family tradition of a certain day
 - others rely solely on their green thumbs to decide
- in our humble opinion, it's best to wait until the frosts are done for the season:
 - this is totally dependant on where you live
 - sometimes this means holding off until August - yes - you heard correctly
 - as "controversial" as this is, frost damages new growth and flower buds

HOW TO PRUNE - it's really easy to overthink this, so we like to keep it simple:

- use clean tools: clean & sharpen between each plant if possible
- open up the center of the plant to let the light in to prevent scale and fungal diseases
- remove:
 - "naughty" stems - if they're touching each other, one has to go. Leave the one that looks healthiest and has the best placement
 - dead or damaged stems
 - super skinny stems - "thinner than a pencil" is the usual rule
 - diseased stems

IN THE END... it has been said that it's near impossible to kill a rose. This is true, but a healthy happy rose will reward you with so many flowers you won't know what to do with yourself.

Please remember - this is intended as a **very simple and basic** guide. There's a lot of good information out there. Be mindful though...roses can become addictive - you could have books and flowers up to your ears before you know it!

HOT TIP - if you know anyone who has amazing roses, most people are happy to share their knowledge and helpful tips. No harm in asking! It's much easier to learn in person than from a book (or factsheet...shhh).

SOME SUPER HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Crawford, D (2015). Garden pests, diseases and good bugs. HarperCollinsPublishers Australia Pty Limited.

David Austin Roses <https://eu.davidaustinroses.com/pages/advice-and-inspiration>

Rose Society of Victoria <https://www.rosesocietyvic.org.au/>

Treloar Roses <https://www.treloarroses.com.au/Seasonal-Rose-Care-Calendar>

