



Roses: the Fall Season

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Roses Flourish in the Fall

Fall Rose Tips:

- * Deadhead in late summer - cut off dead blooms, going down the stem to the first or second 5-leaflet leaf on the stem.
- * Combat excessive moisture by opening the center of the rose bush and allowing good air circulation.
- * Spray a preventive mixture to combat Rust and Powdery Mildews in late Fall.
- * Mulch to retain moisture in the soil.
- * Feed your roses with a 'bloom' fertilizer that does not contain a high amount of nitrogen.



Fall brings warmth and long dry days for the roses. They LOVE it!

With the coming of Fall, the days will shorten and the moisture in the air will increase. Some of us will see foggy days and misty evenings, others will notice a distinct chill in the air and dew on the roses in the early morning.

Wherever we live in California, RUST (a ghastly 'bag' fungus) will start invading the garden. You will recognize it by the characteristic round 'balls' of golden spores on the undersides of the rose leaves.

Powdery Mildew will also be a frequent visitor - as the dampness sets in and the nights get cooler you will spot the tell-tale white 'dust' on the leaves and buds.

These two fungal diseases are the bane of the fall rose garden. They disfigure the leaves and powdery mildew will attack and disfigure the buds as well of most ornamental shrubs. They

should NOT be tolerated.

As a preventive you should make sure the roses have sufficient space around each bush so the breezes can blow through them - good air circulation helps keep the floating fungus spores from landing.

You need to thin out the centers of the bushes so the sunlight can beam down into the crown of the plant.

Deadhead the spent blooms in late August and early September so that the roses will give one last 'push' and provide wonderful fall blooms for late September through December.

If hips (the seed pods left after the petals fall off) have formed, they can be left to ripen and used in floral arrangements for the Fall Table.

Roses need a 'last feeding' in September. This feeding will last them through the Fall and help them into dormancy for the winter months ahead.

Feed with a balanced fertilizer - one with a moderate amount of nitrogen (6-15-8 or 8-12-8) with a bit more phosphorous than usual. You want to stimulate blooms but not any new growth - after all, winter is coming and that new growth can easily freeze or dwindle away. Why waste the energy?

Fall blooms will display amazing colors as the blooms adapt to the cooler nights and the angle of the sun declines. Often these are the best blooms of the entire year.

Control insect damage and eliminate any fungus spores with a spray consisting of hot water and horticultural oils.

For those who spray chemicals, a good choice is Immunox - the straight formula without insecticide added.

E-Rase (a heavy jojoba oil) can also be used to control mildews.

Stop - and Smell The Roses!