

An Invitation to Garden Beauty - A Rose Selection and Bare Root Planting Primer

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Winter is the perfect time to plan new rose plantings in your garden. The best selection of roses is available and you are limited only by your preferences for flower color, bloom form/shape and habit (single/repeat bloomer), and fragrance. Roses come in many shapes and sizes; classifications include: 1) Hybrid teas -- one bloom per long stem on bushes 4' to 7' tall; 2) Floribundas -- 3' to 4' compact plants with flower clusters in near continuous bloom; 3) Grandifloras -- bloom in clusters and one per stem on bushes 6' to 8' tall; 4) Miniatures -- compact form and foliage, usually 15" to 30" tall; 5) Shrubs -- more sprawling in form with clusters of flowers; 6) Climbers -- bushes with 6' to 14' arching canes requiring a supporting structure; 7) Patio or standard trees -- bush is grafted to a 24" or 36" trunk that must be supported by a stake. Modern roses are bred to resist common rose diseases like powdery mildew, rust, and black spot; selecting for disease resistance makes garden care easier.

Bare root roses, dormant plants with root balls covered in moist shavings sealed in plastic, are sold during the cool weather months. They offer great variety at a lower cost and are easily shipped, but require special care at planting. Select a No.1 grade bush with at least three, plump green/plum-colored canes arranged in a vase shape. Look for plump buds on the canes and a solid graft union above the roots. Roots should be light colored and arranged symmetrically around the trunk.

Plant bare root roses soon after purchase in a location with well-drained soil and at least 6 hours of sun daily. Space roses at least three feet apart to ensure good air circulation. Remove all packaging around the roots and soak in water for up to 24 hours. Dig a planting hole twice the width of the root ball to accommodate the roots and allow for growth. Compost or other organic materials can be mixed with native soil (at no more than 1/3 of the total volume), but aren't necessary. Place soil at the bottom of the hole, forming a cone shape for the roots to be carefully spread over. Be sure the graft union sits slightly above the soil line. Place soil over the roots and start filling the hole, gently pressing out air pockets; water thoroughly. Form a water basin around the rose about the size of the plant's root system, making sure that the graft union sits on higher soil at the center of the basin to keep it from sitting in water. Set the irrigation in place. Newly planted roses should bloom in 8 to 12 weeks -- add a 2" layer of mulch to protect roots, and fertilize after the first bloom to avoid damaging new roots.

The ideal time to plant roses is after the last frost in your area. Bareroots can also be potted in a five-gallon plastic pot of organic soil and planted after first bloom when climate conditions allow. Here's to a long season of rose beauty in your garden!

Master Gardener classes are offered monthly throughout the county. You can find our class schedule at: http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education_Classes/?calendar=yes&g=56698, and recorded classes on many gardening topics here: http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education/Classes/.

The Sherwood Demonstration Garden is open on the first and second Saturday's of the month from 9 a.m. -noon until March when we will offer expanded hours. Please check our website for more details https://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/Demonstration_Garden/

Mark your calendar for our annual plant sales in April! Edible plant sale; including fruit, veggies and herbs will be on Saturday, April 16, 2022 8:00AM · 2:00PM. Choose your favorite edibles and shop our incredible tomato selection grown cared for locally by Master Gardener volunteers! The ornamental plant sale will take place on Saturday, April 30, 2022 8:00AM · 2:00PM. We will have a huge selection of trees, shrubs, grasses, succulents, native and perennial plants. Location: Sherwood Demonstration Garden 6699 Campus Drive, Placerville. <http://ucanr.edu/edcsale>

Have a gardening question? Master Gardeners are working hard to answer your questions. Leave a message on our office telephone: 530-621-5512, or use the "Ask a Master Gardener" option on our website: mgeldorado.ucanr.edu. We'll get back to you! Master Gardeners are also on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news.