

New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society

ANTIQUÉ ROSE CARE GUIDE

To increase the health and success of your new plant, keep it in the pot until it is about 12" tall, then plant it in your garden; its best not to plant any new plants in the garden during the hottest months of our summer when everything goes dormant. Wait until the fall to place your Old Garden Rose in the garden... Then just enjoy! Remember, while it is in the pot, your young rose will take frequent watering, about twice a week.

Preparing a Rose Bed

Antique roses are hardy even in poor conditions, but they will be at their best if planted in a favorable situation with rich, well-drained soil. The best place to plant a rose is in an open area that receives at least six hours of direct sunlight daily and allows air movement around each plant.

Good soil preparation will make a great difference in the health and long-term vigor of your roses. The best place to start is to have your soil tested for nutrient content and pH. The ideal pH for roses is around 6.5, but roses will tolerate soils that are lightly alkaline or slightly more acidic. Contact your local county extension agent for information on soil testing.

Incorporating decomposed organic material such as composted manure, composted bark, or a good landscaping soil amendment into the soil of your bed before planting will both enrich a sandy soil and break up a heavy clay soil and allow for proper drainage. Adding coarse sand will also help to loosen heavy soils. As the organic matter decomposes over time it will add nutrients to the soil, will help promote the activity of beneficial soil organisms, and will help buffer a high or low pH. (We don't recommend using peat moss, or peat based soil amendments, or large volumes of mushroom compost because they have not given satisfactory results.)

Planting the Roses

Dig the hole large enough to accommodate the root ball and then enlarge the hole a little more on all four sides so that the soil that the new roots will grow into is not compacted. The plant should be set approximately the same level at which it was growing in its pot, or slightly deeper. Add enough soil to cover the roots, then firm well and water thoroughly to remove air pockets and to settle the soil firmly around the root system. Fill the rest of the hole with soil and mound it slightly around the base of the plant for stability while settling.

Potted roses can also be transplanted into large containers or grown indefinitely in pots in this manner until you choose a permanent location. Remember to use a high quality potting mix when transplanting from one pot to another. Roses growing in containers will need more frequent fertilization and watering than will those planted in the ground and should also receive at least six hours of sunlight a day. Feed twice a year with alfalfa meal. There is no need to use chemical fungicides or pesticides on your Old Garden Rose—these are hearty plants! Just be sure that you water frequently during the first few months. Once your rose is planted in the garden in the fall, only water if we have no rain for a week.

Learn about Old Garden Roses

If you would like to learn more about Old Garden Roses, consider joining the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society. We meet every month, except July and August, at John Calvin Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall, 4201 Transcontinental Dr., Metairie, La. 70006 on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00p.m. Our presentations are all about Old Garden Roses! We are always happy to welcome new members.