

General Suggestions

Pruning should be looked at as applying a few common sense principles to accomplish several tasks. These tasks are to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood; increase air circulation; keep the shrub from becoming a tangled mess; shape the plant; and encourage the growth of flowering wood.

Basic pruning fundamentals that apply to all roses:

- Use clean, sharp equipment
- Cut at a 45-degree angle about ¼ inches above outward-facing bud. The cut should slant away from the bud.
- Entirely remove all dead or dying canes. These can be identified as canes that are shriveled, dark brown, or black.

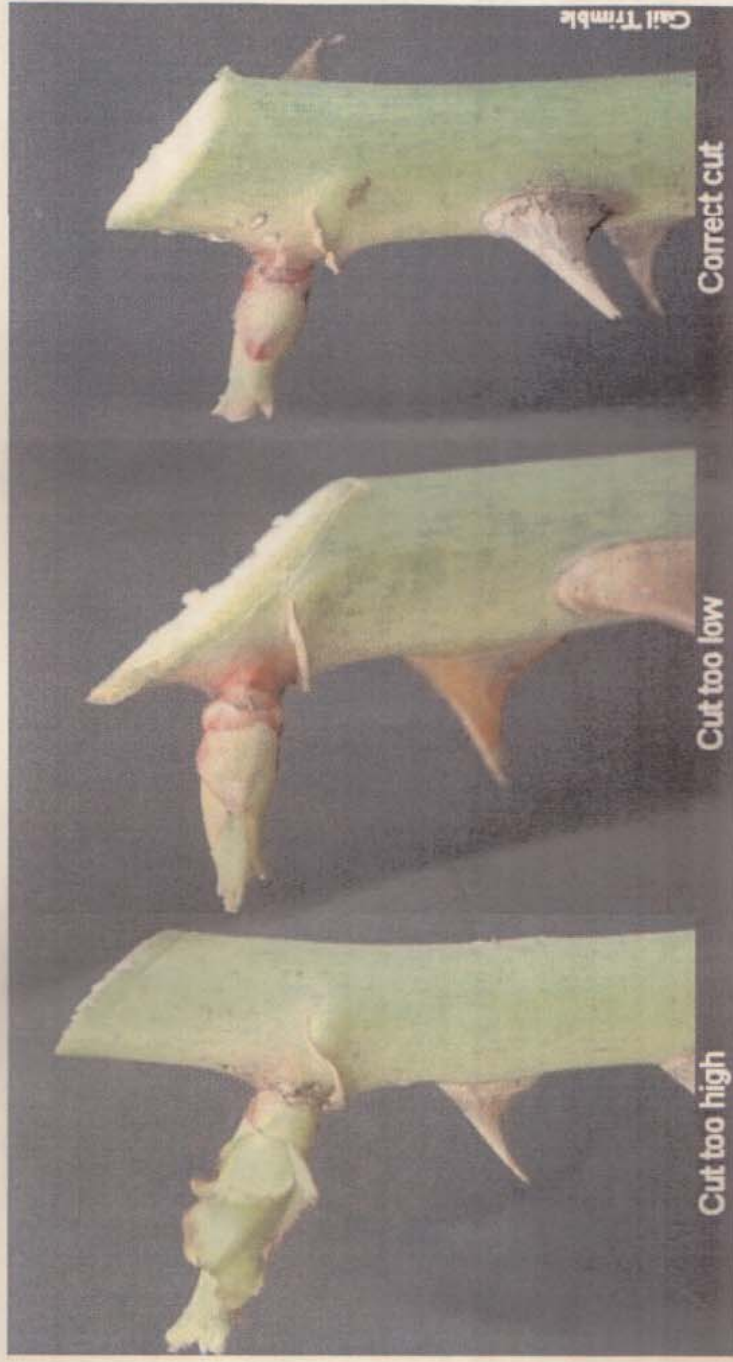
After making cuts, it is suggested to seal the ends of the cuts to prevent the entry of cane borers. White glue works well. However I personally have never put a seal on my roses.

- Remove all thin, weak canes that are smaller than a pencil in diameter.
- If roses are grafted and there is sucker growth, remove it. The best way is to dig down to the root where the sucker is originating and tear it off where it emerges. Cutting suckers off only encourages regrowth of several suckers where there once was one. Let the wound air dry before you replace the soil around it.
- Expect six repeat blooms during the nine-months roses flourish in Southern California!

Pay attention to where you are placing your hands. Roses don't stick you; you stick yourself on the roses! Experienced pruners rarely get severely scratched but it is a good idea to check to see if you have had a tetanus shot in the last 10 years.

Start at the bottom of the bush but look to the top before cutting. Do not let the "decisions" about what to cut make you tense or slow you down.

The cane will tend to grow in the direction the top bud is pointing - cut to an outside bud on upright bushes and to an inside bud on sprawling bushes. Cut about 1/4" away from the bud. If cut closer, the new hygrowth may break off. If cut longer, an unsightly stub will remain.



Cut back to good healthy wood. Discolored pith (interior of cane) may indicate frost or disease damage, and while such a cane may bloom, it will usually die back come summer. At best it is a poor framework for future growth.

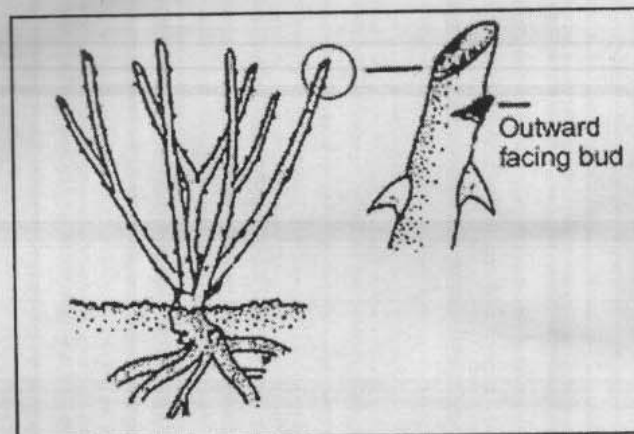
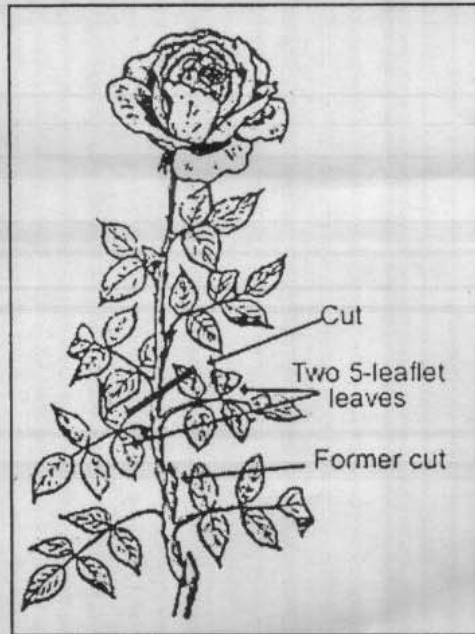
Remove about one-third to one-half of the volume of the plant, leaving healthy canes

Pruning

Dead-Heading

Dead-heading is the removal of faded flowers before they can develop seed. Dead-heading is a form of summer or day-to-day pruning. The standard recommendation is to cut the flower stem back to an outward-facing bud above a five-leaflet or seven-leaflet leaf.

This "rule" applies best to plants that are vigorous. If the plant is weak or small, you may not want to cut off as much material. Each time you remove this much wood you are removing a lot of the food-making ability of the plant. This method works well for most recurrent-blooming types of roses.



PRUNING IS TO PRODUCE AN OPEN CENTERED PLANT.
THIS ALLOWS AIR AND LIGHT TO PENETRATE EASILY.

