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Cultivating the Rose—Cultivating Delight
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Roses may be the best known and most popular cultivated flower in the world. There is an astonishing variety of colors, scents and sizes; with a little knowledge and planning, your garden can be a spectrum of rose color and delight.

The rose originated in Central Asia around sixty million years ago, but has been cultivated only for about the last five thousand years. While there are only about 100 different species, because of man's intense attraction, there are thousands of cultivars. So, how does one choose what rose to plant?

There are important considerations to decide on which roses are best for your garden, starting with landscaping purpose and color.

First, decide what your roses will be used for. Is it for garden display? Are you looking for bushes, edging or ground cover? Or do you want to have your roses climbing along a fence or trellis? There are roses available for almost any garden application.

The American Rose Society divides roses into eighteen different color classes, from white and yellow, through orange and pink, to red and mauve. So another decisions is what you want your color palette to be.

Once you've chosen growth habit and color, then you can decide which variety best fits your landscape plan. The most popular type of rose in the world is the hybrid tea. There are also classic "cut flower" roses -- long stems with buds full of petals that slowly unfurl in a spiral.

There are also grandifloras, which are like hybrid teas but have flowers growing in clusters, and floribundas, which have smaller flowers than hybrid teas, but grow in profuse clusters. Then there are miniature roses from the land of little people.

There is an abundance of choices when it comes to selecting roses for your garden. Perhaps the best way to start is to talk to a knowledgeable gardener and then go to a good nursery and see what's available. For long-range planning, come out and visit the Sherwood Demonstration Garden behind Folsom Lake College (El Dorado Center) after it opens again on April 1, 2016 -- a wondrous variety of roses are growing there.

Roses are often purchased in late winter or early spring, and planting of bare root plants should generally occur with temperatures under 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Roses are not necessarily hard to grow, but like any other plant in your garden, they must be cared for appropriately.

To thrive, roses do best with six or more hours of direct sun per day. Also, plan to protect your beauties from hungry deer. Roses need well drained soils, and in our area, need to be irrigated in summer. Frequency of irrigation will depend on weather conditions and soil texture, but even during the warmest months of summer, roses probably do not need watering more than twice per week in most garden settings.

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The reason roses are so popular is the beauty of the bloom, and correct pruning will dictate how rose growth is directed and plants with blooms are invigorated. Varieties such as hybrid teas and floribundas benefit from annual pruning to remove top growth. Pruning should be done in late winter.

With a little work and some knowledge, roses can be easily grown in any yard and will bring years of color and delight.

Join UCCE Master Gardener and retired meteorologist Steve Savage to learn about gardening in the unique foothills environment at this Saturday's free class. Explore plant hardiness zones; effect of light, heat and terrain on plants; micro-climates; frost formation and protection; and how to make short range forecasts for your garden. The February 20th class is from 9:00 a.m. to noon in the Government Center Hearing Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court in Placerville.

UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County are holding a workshop on Raising Backyard Chickens on Saturday, February 27, 2016. The \$25 fee includes a light breakfast and lunch. Registration deadline is February 23; for more information and to register, go to:

<http://ucanr.edu/survey/survey.cfm?surveynumber=17099>

Master Gardeners are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512. Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County website at <http://ucanr.edu/edmg>. Sign up to receive our online notices and e-newsletter at <http://ucanr.edu/mgenews/>. You can also find us on Facebook.