



PRUNING DEMYSTIFIED

ROSES

What's the secret of transitioning from a competent gardener to a confident one? *Pruning!* Though pruning shrubs strikes fear into the hearts of many, it is a simple and rewarding process.

All you need to do to master it is to understand a few basic principles behind the why, when, and how of pruning shrubs.

Once you implement these ideas and techniques, you'll have more flowers and healthier plants in your garden that same season.

With the holidays behind us, it's time to start thinking about Valentine's Day. And that causes some of us to think about roses. Many people are fearful of planting roses because they think roses are demanding, fussy plants.

Types of Roses

1. *Antique Roses* — "Old garden roses are time-tested survivors. Many have resided in old neighborhoods and cemeteries happily growing with no care from human hands. They are tougher and more resilient than modern roses that were produced mainly for cut flowers or exhibition purposes." - Antique Rose Emporium
2. *Knockout Roses* — These roses are a maintenance free rose that continually produces self cleaning flowers that are resistant to blackspot and downy mildew leaf disease.
3. *Earth-Kind Roses* — Earth-Kind is a special designation given to select rose cultivars by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service through the Earth-Kind landscaping program. It is based on the results of extensive research and field trials; and is awarded only to those roses demonstrating superior pest tolerance, combined with outstanding landscape performance.
4. *Drift Roses* — These are a special group of very easy to grow roses from the company that gives us Knockout Roses. They are low growing, mound-ing and always covered with blooms.

Why should I prune a shrub?

When in doubt, don't prune! Most shrubs don't require regular pruning to be healthy and beautiful. When you consider pruning a shrub in your yard, first ask yourself **why** you want to prune it. Every subsequent decision you'll make in pruning depends on the reason why you are pruning in the first place. So never prune without a reason.

Reasons you may want to prune a shrub:

- Improve flowering and fruiting
- Improve stem color on plants
- Improve the plant's habit or shape
- Encourage rebloom
- Neaten a plant's appearance by removing old blooms or wayward shoots

TIP— Most shrubs have an appealing, natural habit that doesn't require extensive trimming and shaping. Enjoy a low-maintenance landscape and only prune when necessary.

Next month —

- ◆ Care and Maintenance of Roses
- ◆ Flowers to Grow with Roses.