

How to achieve exquisite blooms

THE QUEEN ANNE ROSE

Top tips from our Head Gardener, Jeremy Lockwood



The Queen Anne Rose was named to celebrate the tercentenary of Ascot Racecourse, which was founded by Queen Anne in 1711. This beautiful rose is planted all along the track, in front of the Grandstand, and around the south side of the Parade Ring.

- 1 Plant your rose bush in soil with good drainage, ensuring it is in a sunny location. Roses do particularly well on heavy clay soils.
- 2 Prepare your rose bed by digging in plenty of organic matter i.e. compost or well-rotted manure.
- 3 Plant your rose bush with a handful of bone meal and a little mycorrhiza in and around the planting hole, plant to a depth so that the base of the branches are just above soil level, then firm in well with your heel.
- 4 The first prune should be to around the length of a pair of secateurs, leaving just four or five buds. Once established, pruning can be carried out in March/April when any crossing, weak or damaged branches can be removed - again, prune the branches to an outward facing bud and to a length of a pair of secateurs.
- 5 Fertilise twice yearly with rose fertiliser; once in March, then top dress the rose bed with organic matter, and then again in July with rose fertiliser.
- 6 Remove any dead flower heads as soon as petals fade in order to encourage more flowers to form.
- 7 Spray using Roseclear (or the equivalent) every 10 - 14 days for aphids, mildew, rust and black spot.
- 8 During October/November, reduce the tops of the roses by one third - this will stop strong winds from blowing and rocking the bush about.

HOW TO PLANT HANGING AND WALL-MOUNTED BASKETS

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- 1 Choose a hanging or wall-mounted basket.
- 2 Line the basket with moss or a preformed plastic or coco matt line. Alternatively, you can use just a piece of polythene - just make sure there are drainage holes in the bottom.
- 3 Fill with a multi-purpose compost and ideally add a slow-release granule fertiliser plus some water retention granules (most garden centres stock these). This will help with watering and feeding later on.
- 4 Choosing your plants will depend on your taste, but you will need around 5 - 6 plants for a smaller 12" basket and 7 - 8 plants for a larger basket. I suggest using trailing fuchsias, geraniums, petunias, lobelia or bacopa around the edge and upright plants in the middle. You can plant upright fuchsias, geraniums, dahlias or verbenas depending on your preference.
- 5 Position the basket in a sunny position and water well. If the plants do become dry at any time, a good way of watering them is to sit the basket in a bucket of water and let them soak the water up.
- 6 Liquid feed with a soluble fertiliser every other time you water.
- 7 Remove any dead flowers in order to encourage more to grow.