

Growing Roses in ~~Pots~~ Containers



Mitchie Moe's 'Seattle Sunrise'



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Some of our Minis & Minifloras



Why Consider Containers?

- # Container grown roses can be just as good as those grown in the ground
- # Easier to work on as they are mobile, unless.....
- # Great for those with limited space, or who have more than will fit in their planting beds
- # Containers can feature or highlight an area, e.g., entryway, walkway, driveway, patio, etc.
- # Can be moved to protect from the elements
- # Gives you an opportunity to try something new

What We Will Cover....

- # Container rationale
- # Different types of containers
- # Size of containers
- # Type of planting medium
- # Planting in the container
- # Caring for roses in containers

Container Rationale

- # Plants require more care than if in the ground
- # Not different, but need to pay closer attention to the routine of water and fertilizer
- # Containers are exposed on all sides, and most have no direct contact with the soil, thus they dry out faster than roses in the ground
- # As you water more frequently, nutrients are leached out so need to fertilize more often

Container Rationale (cont.)

- # Most minis and minifloras are grown in containers, but hybrid teas and floribundas do well, if the container size is adequate!
- # Containers allow you to grow them where there is no access to the soil, e.g., patio, balcony, etc.
- # Roses cannot stand in water and need oxygen as much as moisture, so soil mix is important!
- # Plant containers can be anything that holds soil....but remember drainage, drainage, drainage!

Choosing a Container - Clay



- # Attractive, but can be heavy and break easily
- # Provides good air or oxygen exchange
- # Great for plant root growth
- # Most are porous and allows soil to dry out quickly

Choosing a Container - Plastic



- # Light, very inexpensive, many colors, sizes and shapes
- # Absorbs heat, thus soil and roots can get too hot
- # Holds moisture longer than clay
- # No staining, color molded in when made
- # Best for most uses

Choosing a Container - Wood



- # Attractive, many sizes, shapes and colors
- # Minimum temperature fluctuations - good insulators
- # Includes the popular half whiskey barrel
- # Downside - short life as wood rots from constant contact with soil & elements

Choosing a Container - Resin



- # Inexpensive, many colors, sizes and shapes, including the popular half whiskey barrel
- # Very durable, maintenance free, using a lightweight high density resin
- # This 22 inch was easy to pick up, as was the 22 ½ inch half whiskey barrel
- # Resistant to cracking from winter
- # Resin products are made with recyclable materials

Choosing a Container - Fiber



- # Inexpensive, but mainly for temporary use
- # Some are biodegradable, and some may say you can plant as is.....but...
 - If you do, cut rim and bottom off
 - Make several large cuts down the sides to.....
 - Help roots grow out
 - Set plant and container in soil
- # If not biodegradable, remove plant from container and plant

Some Other Types of Containers

Glazed Ceramic



Stone/concrete



Metal



Often, all of these are used as a decorative outside container, with another having the plant merely set inside

Care of Wooden Containers

- # Best containers are made from a rot-resistant wood like redwood or cedar
- # Treat the inside of the container (e.g., use something like a roof patch)
- # Keep containers raised off the ground to create an airspace - helps drainage plus keep the bottom dry and slow the rotting process - bricks work well

The Half Whiskey Barrel



Elena Williams

- # Here is 'Doris Day', a beautiful medium yellow floribunda in a whiskey barrel
- # This barrel is set on some small rocks that provide an airspace and let it drain
- # The barrel will also give you an opportunity to grow some companion plants that will enhance the overall beauty

Size of Containers

- # Pick one that will fit the size of the plant
- # Generally, bigger is better!
- # Usually described by the diameter at the top, e.g., 4", 6", 8" for the smaller sizes, or by how much they hold in gallons for the larger sizes
- # Miniatures need a a 2 - 3 gal, minifloras need a 3 - 5 gal at the minimum
- # Hybrid tea or floribunda - can start with a 5 gal for first year, then replant to a 7, 10 or 15

Soil Mix Simplified

- # Rule one - best to avoid native soil from your garden
- # No matter how well-amended and earthworm laden it is, it is too heavy and will not provide optimal drainage and aeration - lot's of work involved too!
- # An easy way - use an all-purpose, premium soil mix available in bags, or in bulk from garden centers, or mix your own as many do

Our Container Mix

- # We often mix our own using:
 - 1/3 Potting soil
 - 1/3 Organic compost
 - 1/3 Perlite (some use sharp or coarse sand)
 - Optional amendments - all meals; fish, bone, blood, kelp and cottonseed (one cup each for a 15 gal mix)

How Roses Are Packaged

- # Buy #1 plants - should have at least 3 healthy canes about the same diameter
- # Bare Root - preferred - can inspect the roots
- # In container - basically bare root but with a head start, can leave alone for a time.....



Packaging (cont.)

- # Bagged - typically non-patented varieties, roots have been severely trimmed, often rather dry in a sawdust mixture - not recommended!
- # The 'milk carton' type box we don't see very much any more
- # This has probably replaced it
- # 8" container, root structure much better - not cut as much



Getting Your Rose Ready

- # If bare root - soak at least 12 hours or overnight to rehydrate the bush
- # If bagged, plastic boxed - remove ALL the packaging, then soak the now bare root rose
- # Cut off broken roots just above the break, then trim a bit from each root end to stimulate new root development
- # Reduce cane length to about 6 - 8" so roots can support top growth



A good rule of thumb - the canes should be no longer than the roots

Planting in Containers

- # Check drainage holes - a MUST!
- # Put in a small amount of soil mix
- # Add some super phosphate (0-45-0), about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for 5 gal, proportionally less for those smaller
- # Then add enuf soil mix to create a small mound for the bush to sit on
- # Gently place rose in container, spreading out the roots over the mound - did you soak it well?



John Moe

I see that I need to trim some more from the roots, so they don't wrap around in the container!

Planting in Containers (cont.)

- # Then half fill container with soil mix keeping the bud union about even with the rim
- # Water thoroughly; let drain, fill container with soil mix and water well again
- # Check for settling so it has room to hold water
- # Mound it up with soil mix or mulch to at least half its height until you see new growth - NO fertilizer until then!
- # *More roses die from drying out than from poor planting!*

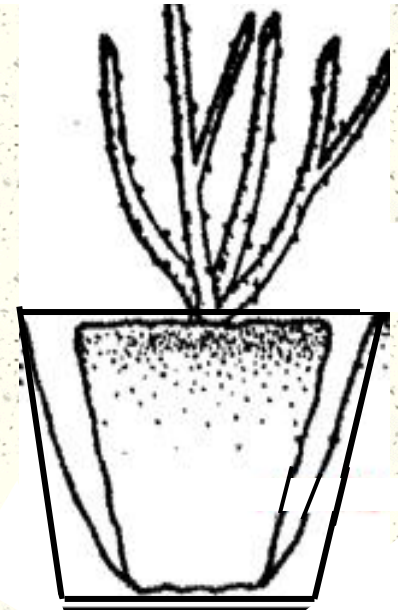
Replanting Containerized Roses

- # Water rose well the day before
- # Gently tap root ball out and inspect
- # If newly planted, try not to disturb roots
- # If rose has been in the container since the previous season or longer, and roots are all entangled and spiraled, roughen up the bottom quarter so the roots can grow outward
- # Inspect new container, check drainage holes



Replanting Containerized Roses (cont.)

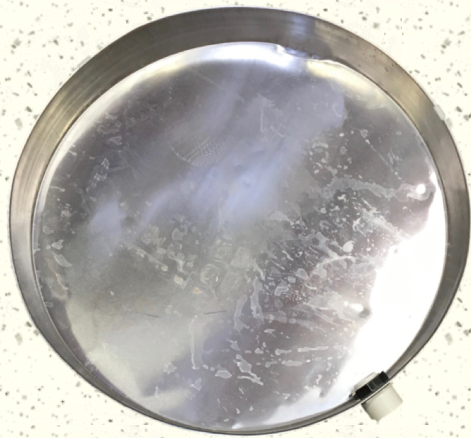
- # Put in a small amount of soil mix
- # Add some super phosphate (0-45-0), about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for 5 gal, proportionally less for those smaller, then add soil mix to cover
- # Set plant in container
- # Half fill container with soil mix keeping the bud union slightly below the rim
- # Water thoroughly, let drain and then fill with soil mix and water again
- # Mound it up to half its height until you see new growth - NO fertilizer until then!



Watering your Containers

- # Containerized roses need frequent watering!
- # Foliage will wilt with insufficient water - a good indicator - do NOT let it dry out!
- # More thorough watering - often the soil pulls away from side of container - water just runs down and out
- # Water slowly several times, or set in pan of water so root ball absorbs from the bottom
- # Bubbler or soaker heads work well, as does a drip system

An Aid to Watering



- # If you have a large container and want to place it on deck, the drainage might stain the wood
- # Here is an option - these are the large pans that go under a water heater
- # As you see, they can be fitted with a drain hose
- # Some common sizes are 20 and 24 inch aluminum pans, and 24 and 26 inch black plastic pans
- # Plastic pans are about half the cost of the aluminum ones

Caring for Roses in Containers

- # They need sunlight (6+ hours/day) like any rose planted in the ground
- # Frequent watering leaches nutrients, so they need fertilizer more often. Liquid or water soluble fertilizer works great
- # Those that stay in containers need a larger one as size changes - change soil every three to four years
- # Although roses are tough plants, they do better with a bit of winter protection

Winter Care Options

- # Plants are always better off in the ground during winter in freezing climates
- # Plant temporarily for the winter - bury the container and add mulch
- # The more soil in the container, the better insulated the roots will be
- # You can nest in larger containers and fill with soil or mulch around inner container

Winter Care Options (cont.)

- # Cluster containers, move to sheltered area near a building or a south facing wall, encircle with wire mesh (like chicken wire) and fill with leaves or mulch
- # Create a makeshift cold frame with bales of hay covered with an old window, a glass door or a plastic sheet, e.g., Visqueen
- # Consider other growing areas of your home where there are some warmer spots

Maintaining your Roses

- # Deadheading or removing spent blooms is about all you need to do during the growing season, similar to those in the ground
- # Prune back to just above an outward facing five-leaflet leaf
- # To encourage larger blooms and strong canes: Cut the stem lower on the bush
- # To reduce the size of the plant: Cut back to an acceptable height, leaving some foliage on the canes
- # *Bottom line - growing them in containers - not all that different from growing in ground, just have to pay closer attention to the routine culture essentials of water and fertilizer!*

Thank You



Mitchie Moe's 'Lynn'

Questions?

