

Winterizing Roses & Hydrangea

Tips For A Successful Winter Survival



Protecting This Season. Enjoy Next Season.

Shrub roses are the number one color anchor plant in many landscapes. These awesome performers bloom on canes that develop from their own root stock very much like spirea or barberry. Their low maintenance growth habit may lull a homeowner into thinking “no maintenance”. Special care is required in order to enjoy brilliant color in the spring.

Winterizing Roses

All roses including the shrub rose needs winter protection of the lower 8-9" of the canes. This is accomplished by using re-usable rose collars. Rose collars are 9" high heavy duty plastic strips that clip together to form a 12" diameter circle that should be filled with alternating layers of soil and mulch. Always top the insulating mix with a layer of soil to reduce the chances of the wind whipping the mulch out of the collar. This winterization usually occurs from late October to mid-November. A good guide is to winterize after all flowering has ended and the leaves hang limp from numerous 15-20 degree nights. If pruning is necessary, do not cut shorter than 18"

In spring when very early reddish-pink buds appear on the canes, remove the collar and the mulch/soil. Remove any winter-damaged cans but strive to leave 12" of cane to begin the new season. The procedure will protect tea, floribunda and climbing roses.

Winterizing Hydrangeas

Hydrangea macrophylla varieties such as Endless Summer, Blushing Bride, Big Daddy and Glowing Embers need some winter protection. The objective should be to protect the crown of the plant at all costs while encouraging as many of the buds along the branches to survive. Snow is the maximum insulator but organic mulch of shredded hardwood about 18" deep should be placed around the crown of the plant in mid to late November. It is very important that the plant has gone fully dormant at the time the mulch is applied. Avoid fall fertilization of this shrub. A final thorough watering in late November just before the ground freezes will help ensure winter survival. Prune little or none of this shrub for the first 2-3 years to ensure that the chill of the winter will not be as likely to penetrate deep into the stems. Minor pruning may be done when re-growth begins in the spring. If the plant was stressed the previous summer, or the area is exposed to the north or west winter winds, the entire plant could be wrapped in burlap. A little winter care will repay you with impressive mop head blooms the next summer.



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