LESS-TOXIC CHEMICAL CONTROLS
If disease or pest problems can’t be managed by good garden housekeeping, you may want to use a less-toxic pesticide. Because these products prevent but do not cure disease, treatments must begin before symptoms are widespread. To avoid burning leaves and flowers with chemical spray, water plants the day before you treat them and test a few leaves and petals before spraying the whole plant. Be sure to coat both sides of the leaves.

- Horticultural oils help protect roses from fungal diseases. They create a thin coating that keeps spores from infecting the leaves. Treatment should begin when new leaves appear in spring and must be repeated whenever you see new growth.
- Biofungicides attack fungal diseases like powdery mildew and black spot.
- Neem oil can help prevent powdery mildew, black spot, and rust. Neem oil is toxic to bees, so it is safest to spray it in the evening.

- Plant-based insecticides with garlic extract both kill and repel insect pests such as aphids and rose slugs (sawfly larvae). Apply early in the morning or at dusk, to prevent leaf burn.
- Potassium bicarbonate, similar to common baking soda, can prevent powdery mildew. It must be applied weekly.
- Or, use this baking soda mixture: 1 tablespoon baking soda, plus 2 teaspoons horticultural oil in 1 gallon of water. Spray when you first detect disease, and repeat when new symptoms appear.
- Sulfur can be effective against black spot, powdery mildew, and rust. Do not use when temperatures are higher than 85°F to avoid burning leaves.

Keep your roses healthy with these eco-friendly products

- Anti-transpirant
  - Cloud Cover, Last Pruf
- Biofungicide (Bacillus subtilis)
  - Bonide All Seasons Horticultural and Dormant Spray Oil, Monterey Horticultural Oil, Summit Year Round Spray Oil
- Neem Oil
  - Bonide Neem Oil, Bonide Rose RX 3 in 1, Garden Safe Fungicide 3, Monterey 70%
- Neem Oil, Natria Neem Oil
- Plant-based insecticide
  - Dr. Earth Final Stop Yard and Garden Insect Killer, Dr. Earth Final Stop Rose and Flower Insect Killer (both in concentrate or ready to use spray)
- Potassium Bicarbonate
  - Monterey Bi-Carb Old Fashioned Fungicide, Organic Labs Organocide Organic Fungicide
- Slow Release Fertilizer
  - Dr. Earth Organic Rose and Flower Fertilizer, E.B. Stone Organics Rose and Flower Food, Omnacote
- Soil Probe
  - Several brands at your local nursery

You can grow beautiful roses without insecticides and fungicides that can kill beneficial insects and pollute local creeks, rivers, bays, and the ocean. These tips will help you to protect your family’s health and the environment while you grow strong, healthy roses with glorious blooms.

When you buy a new rose, be sure to start with a healthy plant. Either buy bare-root plants (usually sold in December and January), or buy grown-on plants in peat pots. Look for glossy foliage and an evenly moist rootball. Avoid root-bound plants with spindly stems or discolored or spotted leaves. Potted roses can stay in their pots for several months, as long as you give them enough water.

WWW.OURWATEROURWORLD.ORG
Common home and garden pesticides are found in stormwater runoff, treated wastewater, and in local waterways, sometimes at levels that can harm sensitive aquatic life. Our Water Our World is a joint effort by water pollution prevention agencies, participating retail stores, and pesticide distributors and manufacturers—working together to reduce the risks associated with pesticide use.

Our Water Our World fact sheets and store displays educate residents about less-toxic pest management. For the rest of the series of fact sheets, visit www.OurWaterOurWorld.org. Look for the Less Toxic • Eco-friendly tag next to less-toxic products in participating stores and nurseries. Use the Pesticide and Water Pollution fact sheet for information on active ingredients in common pesticides that may cause water quality problems.

Pest control strategies and methods described in this publication are consistent with integrated pest management (IPM) concepts, and are based on scientific studies and tests in actual home and garden settings. Use suggested products according to label directions and dispose of unwanted or leftover pesticides at a household hazardous waste collection facility or event. For more information on pesticide disposal, visit www.epa503t.com. No endorsement of specific brand name products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products that are not mentioned.

For more information, contact:
- Bio-Integral Resource Center (BIRC), 510.524.2567, www.birc.org
- University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners in your area
- University of California IPM website, www.ipm.ucdavis.edu
PLANTING ROSES
Before you buy, be sure you have a good spot in your garden for your new rose.
• Roses need at least six hours of direct sunlight per day for most of the growing season. Sunlight encourages blooms and discourages disease.
• Give roses room to grow. Good air circulation is very important for preventing disease.
• Consider planting roses in mixed beds (with other flowers and vegetables). Growing different types of plants in your garden attracts beneficial insects and helps roses stay pest and disease-free.
• Roses need good drainage. In the spot you’ve chosen for planting, dig a hole the size of a gallon jug and fill it with water. If the hole doesn’t drain in an hour or less, choose another spot or build a raised bed for your roses.

CARING FOR YOUR ROSES
Water
It is important to give your roses the right amount of water. Waterlogged soil will kill roses, and drought conditions can stress plants, making them more susceptible to pests and diseases.
• Keep the soil moist. Use your finger or a soil probe to test the soil beneath the surface. Check roses in pots at least twice a week.
• Roses grown in sandy soil will need to be watered more often than roses grown in clay soil.
• Watering with soaker hoses or a drip irrigation system delivers water to the soil without wetting the leaves. This can help prevent fungal diseases such as powdery mildew and black spot. If you water with a sprinkler, water early in the day so the foliage will dry out before evening.
• During drought, extreme heat, windy weather, or when roots have been disturbed by transplanting, roses may wilt. An antitranspirant spray coats leaves with a film that helps the plant retain moisture. Do not spray flowers or buds. Reapply on new growth.

Fertilizer
Roses prefer slightly acidic soil (pH 6.2 to 6.8) that is not high in salt.
• Use slow-release fertilizers such as compost or alfalfa meal, cottonseed meal, blood meal, or bat guano to acidify the soil and release nutrients slowly over a long period. This helps prevent too much new growth, which attracts aphids and diseases. Compost and organic natural fertilizers will also improve your soil.
• Avoid animal manure fertilizers, which are often high in salts.
• During the growing season, remove any leaves and shoots affected by disease but do not prune too much. Too much pruning will cause too much new growth that can attract aphids and powdery mildew.
• Remove all diseased prunings and rake up any diseased leaves and blossoms as they fall. Do not compost them unless you have hot compost that you turn regularly. Diseases can be transmitted from stems, leaves, and petals on the ground, and from diseased plant material.

Managing common rose pests and diseases
Many common pests and diseases that affect roses can be controlled without resorting to chemical pesticides. Inspect plants regularly to detect any diseases or pests before they become a problem. Become familiar with the pests and diseases that are common in your area. Before you treat plants for insect problems, look for beneficial insects (good bugs) such as ladybugs, lacewings, syrphid flies, and orange-and-black soldier beetles. If you see these natural enemies of rose pests in your garden, don’t use an insecticide, because you are likely to harm beneficial insects rather than pests. (See Less-toxic Chemical Controls.)

Aphids
Tiny (1/8”), sucking insects that feed on plant sap. Often found in groups on new shoots and flower buds. Buds and flower buds on over-fertilized plants may cause leaves to discolor or turn brown with sooty mold growing on the honeydew that aphids deposit. Natural predators can reduce aphids’ numbers. Control: Wipe off by hand or spray off with water, prune off infested growth, or spray with insecticidal soap or horticultural oil. Use slow-release fertilizers to prevent growth spurs, as aphids are attracted to tender young plant growth.

Rust
Fungal disease that causes orange or yellow spots on any green portion of the plant. Lasiodiplodia theobromae is most common. Better drainage often helps prevent rust. Control: Remove affected leaves and发病 parts of the plant. Use a fungicide with copper and sulfur. Do not prune too much new growth, which attracts aphids and diseases. Compost and organic natural fertilizers will also improve your soil.
• Avoid animal manure fertilizers, which are often high in salts.
• If you use a pesticide, try a plant-based insecticide with garlic extract, and apply it in early morning or at the end of the day so that leaves won’t burn in the hot sun.

Black spot
Fungal disease that shows as circular black spots with fringed edges on leaves and stems. Leaves may yellow and drop. Optimum conditions for infection: 64°F to 75°F and 95 percent relative humidity, so it is more common near the coast. Spores must be continuously wet for 7 hours for infection to occur. Control: Choose resistant varieties. Strip leaves and/or prune away and destroy infected plant material, increase air circulation, and mulch to prevent spread of spores.

Powdery mildew
Fungal disease that causes curled leaves and a white or gray powdery coating on leaves, shoots, and flower buds. Optimum conditions for infection: Night temperatures around 61°F and 95 to 99 percent relative humidity, daytime temperatures up to 81°F and 40 to 70 percent relative humidity. Grows well on young leaves and buds. Control: Plant disease-resistant rose varieties. Wash leaves in early afternoon with a strong spray, avoid heavy fertilization or heavy pruning that causes spurs of new growth.

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