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# PLANT YOUR ROSES CAREFULLY

## *A Few Hints for the Home Gardener*

By C. C. HILLARY

**W**HILE the planting of roses is a comparatively simple business, there are certain rules which must be followed if losses are to be avoided. Most of the roses sold by nurserymen in this State are raised on what is known as *Fortuniana* stock. The origin of this stock is somewhat obscure, but it is thought to be the result of a cross between *Rosa banksia* and *Rosa laevigata*. Whatever its origin, however, it is certainly a very vigorous stock and one which thrives better in the soils and climate of this State than any other. A further advantage is its compatability, that is, the ready way in which it unites and grows in harmony with most other hybrid tea and hybrid polyantha roses.

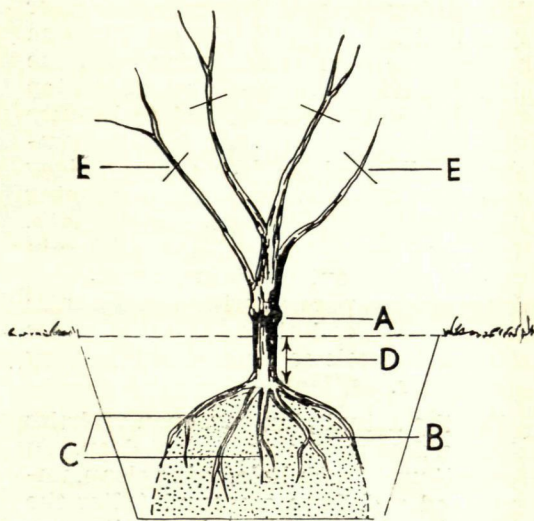
But although it is the most suitable stock for local conditions, it has two serious disadvantages. It is difficult to strike, and it does not transplant so readily as most other stocks. The difficulty of striking the cuttings is mainly the concern of nurserymen and will not be dealt with here, but the difficulty of transplanting roses growing on *Fortuniana* stocks concerns every grower of roses, whether amateur or professional.

The principal reason why roses budded on *Fortuniana* stocks are difficult to transplant, is that the stock rarely becomes fully dormant during winter. Except in the very coldest localities, there is always some growth and, on plants which are left unpruned, often some flowers as well. This means that the roots also continue in action and roots that are active suffer considerable shock when lifted from the soil and exposed to the air. If the roots are exposed for any length of time, the shock is even greater, and if at the same time they are subjected to the action of wind or sun, or both, the shock is often so great that it causes the death of the plant.

### PROTECT THE ROOTS

It should be obvious from this, therefore, that the utmost care must be taken to protect the roots as much as possible from the time they are lifted in the nur-

sery until they are tucked away snugly again in their new soil homes. Wrappings of some kind should be placed around the roots as soon as the plants are lifted and left there until such time as they are planted again.



**A ROSE-BUSH CORRECTLY PLANTED**

A—Union about 1in. above ground level.

B—Mound of clean, unmanured soil.

C—Roots draped evenly around the mound.

D—Distance of 4in. from topmost root to ground level.

E—Top growth shortened back where indicated.



Another cause of loss is loose planting. No rose root will grow again if it is left suspended in a pocket of air. Firm planting is essential and plenty of fine earth should be packed around and in between the roots. It is also advisable to go over the young roses a couple of times after planting to make sure that the soil around the plants is well trodden down.

### PRUNING PAYS

The transplanting will also be helped considerably if the top growth is pruned hard back as soon as the roses are planted. However carefully roses are lifted in the nursery, there is always a big loss of roots. Until such time as the new roots are functioning, the rose must live on itself and the less top hamper there is the less the drain on the plant. The shortening of the top growth also reduces the area of wood exposed to the drying action of sun and wind—a factor of serious consequence to any young rose before it has put forth new roots.

Before planting any rose, cut off all damaged roots and remove any sucker eyes that may be showing on the stem below the union of the scion with the stock. Having treated the roots, the top growth should be shortened to balance the loss of roots. First remove completely all unripe shoots and twiggy growths. Then shorten the remaining shoots by at least half their length. Next remove any leaves that may remain on the plant, cutting them off close to the stem, and pare off with a sharp knife any surplus wood at the junction of the scion and stock so that it will quickly callus over.

For the actual planting, open up holes about a foot square and a foot deep. In the bottom of each hole, using clean, unmanured soil, form a mound (after the style of an inverted basin) with its apex where the stock of the plant is to rest. The top of the mound should be low enough to permit of the rose being

planted about four inches deep, measured from the topmost root to the ground line.

Next, take the rose selected for the first hole and place the base of the plant on top of the mound, spreading the roots as evenly as possible around and down the sides. Then, using clean unmanured soil, half fill the hole, pressing the soil firmly in between and around the roots to exclude the air-pockets. A bucket of water should then be poured into the hole to help the further settlement of the soil around the roots. The planting of all the roses can then be completed to this stage, and later in the day, after the water has drained away, the holes can be filled to the top with soil, which should be well firmed around the plants.

A summary of the principal rules which should always be observed during the planting of roses, is as follows:—

(1) Do not leave the bundle of plants lying about with the roots exposed; keep them covered, taking one plant only at a time for planting.

(2) Never allow manure to come into actual contact with the roots.

(3) Do not plant too deeply. Four or five inches measured from the topmost root to ground level is quite deep enough.

(4) Plant firmly.

(5) If shoots have grown from one side of the plant only, place the rose in the ground with the shoots pointing towards the south; the sun will soon encourage the formation of growth on the northern side of the plant.

(6) Do not plant your roses too closely together; allow three feet between the moderate growers and four feet between those that are vigorous.

(7) Keep the young plants well supplied with water, even in winter, if the rainfall is light.