

Climbing and Rambling Roses for Any Garden

First let us explain what Climbing and Rambling roses are. To be classified as a climber, a rose must only be taller than its' counterparts. The main difference between a Climber and a Rambler is that the Climber has stiffer canes and tends to grow more vertically than does a Rambler. The Rambler has more flexible canes and tends to want to grow more horizontally than the Climbers do. This is because of their genetic origin, which I will discuss later. Additionally, most Climbers are repeat blooming, whereas, most Ramblers bloom only once a year.

You might ask, "Why should I grow Climbers and Ramblers?" There are a number of good reasons. First, they can give you a vertical garden. Most gardens lack height. By installing a few well-placed climbers, you can create interest at and above eye level. In addition to that, Climbers and Ramblers can be great for space conservation in the garden. With one well-placed plant you can have literally hundreds of blooms to enjoy and cut. Another reason to grow Climbers and Ramblers is to cover an ugly object in the yard ...a fence, swing set, gazebo, a chimney, a shed, etc. And finally, the larger Climbers and Ramblers can be trained up into an ornamental tree to provide two sets of blooms. The tree will usually bloom first, followed several weeks later by the rose. This can create a very interesting landscaping effect. For this use, you would be better served to use one of the larger Climbers or Ramblers, many of which only bloom once. However, in this usage, that is not a problem since you are not sacrificing garden footage to this plant. It is sharing space with the tree, and actually doubling the effect of the tree. With a little imagination, I am sure you can think of other uses for climbers and ramblers.

The climbers and ramblers come from several different sources. Following are some of these sources and a brief description of each:

Rosa Multiflora - Tall, upright growing and hardy, with large clusters of small single or semi-double flowers, Rosa Multiflora is the parent of many hardy climbers and climbing shrubs. These can be trained up trees, on large trellises, up chimneys, etc. and can be counted on not to die back in our cold winters.

Rosa Wichurana - More horizontal in growth than Rosa Multiflora, with flexible, long canes, Rosa Wichurana is the parent of many Rambler roses. It can be trained on fences, up trees, over shrubs, hanging over a wall, etc.

Climbing Hybrid Teas and others - Many modern climbers are the result of sports of bush Hybrid Teas, Floribundas and seedlings. The Hybrid Tea sports tend to be stingy with their bloom in our climate. The seedling varieties are much better performers, smaller than the Multiflora and Wichurana descendants are and with better repeat bloom. They are good for growing on smaller trellises, along fences, on the sides of sheds, etc.

Climbing Miniature roses - My first question when considering Miniature Climbers is "What's the point?" I thought Miniature roses were supposed to be small. On further consideration, I concede that there are some good varieties, one of which, Jeanne Lajoie, I highly recommend. Most Miniature Climbers as you would expect are somewhat smaller than their full sized counterparts, although Jeanne Lajoie can grow as tall as ten feet under ideal conditions. It is the exception that proves the rule, so to speak. Miniature Climbers make nice accent plants in a garden of rose bushes or

perennials, can be grown on a fence or small trellis, and some can even be allowed to trail along the ground or over a wall for an interesting effect.

Climbing Shrubs - This is sort of a catch all class, with roses from various genetic backgrounds. Some of the best climbing roses are in this class. They will not be registered as climbers in the "Handbook For Selecting Roses," but rather, as shrubs. Probably the best example of excellent climbers in the shrub class is the Hybrid Kordesii subclass introduced by Wilhelm Kordes. Several of these, one of which is the beautiful Dortmund, are highly rated roses that are extremely vigorous, hardy and disease resistant, while repeating bloom quite well for such large plants.

Care of Climbers and Ramblers - The very hardy varieties require less care than most Hybrid Teas and Floribundas. The Hybrid Tea and Floribunda types require about the same amount of care as their Hybrid Tea and Floribunda bush rose cousins. The main difference is in pruning. The repeat blooming climbers should be pruned in the early spring after danger of hard frost has passed. Old, dead and damaged wood should be removed. Any old basal canes that have become less productive and can be spared should be removed to keep the plant young and productive. The lateral canes (those growing from the primary basal canes) should be shortened somewhat, and the plant should be trimmed to keep it within the bounds you have dedicated to it. This is where prior planning during the plant selection stage comes in handy. If you have selected the right size plant for the area you have designated, you will have to do less pruning and your plant will look more natural. Additionally, deadheading after the first bloom encourages better repeat blooming. This is also true of the smaller Hybrid Teas and Floribundas, but is an easier job on these small plants than on the sometimes skyscraper climbers.

Winter protection should consist of covering the base of the plant with the same materials you are using to cover your HTs. and Fls. e.g. shredded leaves, horse stable bedding (manure), hardwood mulch, etc. This is done more as an insurance measure than as a requirement. Hopefully you will have selected a hardy variety of Climber, and won't have to worry about it dying back to the ground. However, our winters are highly variable as to the low temperatures they achieve. Some winters only have temperatures as low as 0 to 5 degrees fahrenheit, whereas others may get as low as 25 degrees below zero. You may also spray the entire plant with an anti-desiccant to keep the plant from drying and cracking from the cold winter temperatures and winds. This should preferably all be done sometime in November in the Greater Cincinnati area. Even if we haven't had much cold weather by then, winter protection should still be done then. The practice of waiting for a hard freeze is dangerous and impractical. The later into the winter season we go before having one of these freezes, the harder they are when we do get them. This can be very damaging to the plants. Whatever you do, DON'T cut back your climbers at this time of year. Just make sure they are well tied to their support so they don't blow around too much in the winter winds. The main keys to winter survival are 1) planting hardy varieties 2) Keeping the plants in good condition during the growing season and 3) performing the tasks described above.

Some Recommended Climbers and Ramblers

<u>Name</u>	<u>ARS Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Aloha	7.8	CI HT, medium pink (mp), 58 petals, 8-10', fragrant, introduced 1949
Altissimo*	8.5	LCl, medium red (mr), 7 petals, continuous bloom, 10-12', slightly fragrant, 1966
America* fragrant	8.3	LCl, orange pink (op), 43 petals, 18-10', very AARS winner 1976
Clair Matin* 1960	8.9	LCl, mp, 15 petals, 10-12', fragrant (sweetbrier),
Compassion	8.5	LCl, op, 36 petals, 8-10', sweet fragrance, 1972
Cl. Dainty Bess	8.6	CI HT, light pink (lp), 5-7 petals, 8-10', spicy fragrance, 1935
Dr. J. H. Nicolas	7.4	LCl, mp, 50 petals, 8', fragrant, 1940
Don Juan	8.2	LCl, dr, 30-35 petals, 8-10', very fragrant, 1958
Dortmund*	9.2	HKor, mr, 5-7 petals, large clusters, holly-like foliage, 10-12', fragrant, 1955
Dublin Bay*	8.6	LCl, mr, 25 petals, 8-10', fragrant, 1975
Eden Rose		Not the CI Ht shown in The Handbook For Selecting Roses. See Pierre de Ronsard'.
Frau Karl Druschki	7.4	Hp, w, 35 petals, 7-9', no fragrance, 1901
Fourth of July*	8.0	LCl, rb, 10-16 petals, 8-10', very fragrant, AARS winner 1999
Fred Loads	8.5	S, or, 5-7 petals, large clusters, 8-10', fragrant, 1968
Galway Bay	8.1	LCl, op, 25 petals, 8-10', slightly fragrant, 1966
Golden Showers	7.3	LCl, my, 27 petals, 8-10', fragrant, AARS winner 1956
Handel	8.0	LCl, rb, 25-30 petals, 8-10', slightly fragrant, 1965
Cl. Iceberg	8.6	CI Fl, w, 25 petals, 8-10', very fragrant, 1968
Jeanne Lajoie*	9.2	CI Min, mp, 40 petals, 8-10', slightly fragrant, 1975
John Cabot*	8.9	HKor, mp, 40 petals, 8-10', fragrant, 1978
John Davis*	8.6	HKor, mp, 40 petals, large clusters 10-12', strong spicy fragrance, 1986
New Dawn	8.6	LCl, lp, 35-40 petals, 12-15', fragrant, first patented rose, first repeat blooming climber, 1930
Parade	8.1	LCl, dp, 33 petals, 8-10', fragrant, 1953
Phyllis Bide	8.6	CI Pol, yb, 15-20 petals, 6-8', 1923,

Some Recommended Climbers and Ramblers (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>ARS Rating</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Pierre de Ronsard	8.1	LCl, pb, 40+ petals, 8', slightly fragrant, 1987
Rhonda	8.3	LCl, mp, double, 8-10', slightly fragrant, 1968
Rosarium Uetersen	8.5	LCl, dp, very double (142 petals), 8-10', fragrant, 1977
Sally Holmes*	8.9	S, w, 5-7 petals, large clusters, 8', slightly fragrant, 1976
Viking Queen	7.6	LCl, mp, 60 petals, 8-10', very fragrant, 1963
Westerland*	8.1	S, ab, 20 petals, 8-10', very fragrant, 1969
White Dawn	7.6	LCl, w, 35 petals, 8-10', fragrant, 1949
William Baffin*	8.9	HKor, dp, 20 petals, 10-12', no fragrance, 1983

*Highly recommended