



A rose is a rose is a rose

By [Dena Bolton](#), Nashville Gardening Examiner

The rose (*Rosa*) is the first flower that comes to mind when one thinks of Valentine's Day. It is no wonder. Their blossoms and their intoxicating scent make the rose the ideal flower of romance. However, many people do not grow roses, fearful of the diseases roses attract and the care they require. Nevertheless, this flower of love can grow in any yard given the right conditions – and the right rose.

Knock Out roses have become extremely popular over recent years and for good reason. They are incredibly hardy and less prone to diseases, such as the dreaded black spot. Knock Outs are also profuse bloomers and will bloom from spring through fall until the first frost. Deadheading encourages virtually continuous blooming during this time period. They do not have a strong scent; but I have noticed with mine, due to the profuse floral display, that the cumulative effect leaves a nice scent in the air.

Knock Outs do not require a great deal of pruning, except to control their size and shape. You do not even need to prune them in winter. They do require a bit of care standard for all roses. Plant in well-drained soil. Keep them mulched. Apply fertilizer during the growing season. Water regularly. (Note: It is best to water roses in the morning so their leaves will have a chance to dry down on the chances of their developing various fungi.) Also, like most roses, they do much better with lots of sun. They have too much sun, which also helps in keeping various fungi at bay.

While Knock Out roses are quite hardy, they are not totally immune to various diseases and insect attacks. Black spot is a common problem. I have noticed that my Knock Outs do not develop this disease as badly as some of my other roses. The best treatment is to remove the leaves and throw them in the trash. (Never, ever toss rose parts into your compost. You will have tossed diseased leaves and insects attacking your Knock Outs, you can give them a good spray with the garden hose to knock off the bugs. Companion planting can also keep the aphids away. I have found this type of companion planting to work extremely well for me.)

If you would love to have roses in your yard but believe that you are one of those that could never grow them, Knock Outs are a great choice. They come in a variety of colors, and some even have double blooms. Plant one bush as a show piece or several together to form a hedge. You will be glad you did.

Tip of the day: Leave some of the dead blooms on your Knock Outs to form rose hips. Knock Outs can produce rose hips.

Did you know: The roses with the most scent tend to have smaller blooms and are white. Instead of using chemical pesticides to control insects, they use their scent.

One of my favorite growers/landscapers is in Greeneville,

TN. Visit their online store: [Heritage Gardens](#).

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