



ROSE TERMS TO KNOW

As you read about roses, you're bound to run across certain terms again and again. Here are a few of the most frequently used words and phrases in the rose-growing world.

BUD

In rose jargon, this word has several meanings. First, of course, it refers to an unopened flower. It may also refer to the growth bud or growth "eye" found where leaves join stems. And budding is a common propagation technique: a plant is developed from a growth eye by a special grafting technique.

BUD UNION

On a commercially propagated rose bush, the bud union is the enlarged, knobby part of the plant, generally 1 to 3 inches above the roots, where top growth joins with the understock. All major stems grow from the bud union, which increases in size each year.

CANES

The principal stems which grow from the bud union (or from very low on the bush) and form a rose's basic structure.

CODE NAME

Many new roses are registered with the international rose registry under an official code name; the roses may be sold, however, under one or more commercial "synonyms" that have greater popular appeal. The first three letters of the official code name generally incorporate part of the name of the hybridizer or firm, e.g. Mac- for McGredy, Mei- for Meilland.

DOUBLE

In some 19th-century rose literature, a double flower is defined as containing 10 to 14 petals—that is, about twice the number of petals that a single flower possesses. Today, a double flower is considered to be one containing 25 petals or more; very full-petaled flowers are called "very double."

GROWTH EYE

An undeveloped growth bud that can produce a new lateral. The eye is a small bump on a stem immediately above the point where a leaf is attached (or where a leaf was once attached). In the photo of Olympiad, a growth eye is visible where the topmost leaf joins the stem of the center blossom.

HIP

If a rose is pollinated (as frequently happens naturally), a seed pod—the hip—can form after the flower's petals fall. Rose hips often turn brilliant colors in autumn. If no hip grows, it is called a 'sterile rose.'

LATERAL

A secondary stem that arises from a growth eye along a main cane.



ROSE TERMS TO KNOW (CONT'D)

PEGGING DOWN

The practice of bending and securing to the ground canes of certain roses (hybrid perpetuals, various shrub roses) that have arching or lax growth. Flowering laterals will then grow along the bent-over canes.

PILLAR ROSE

A relatively small-growing climbing rose that can be trained upright and still produce flowering laterals from buds along the canes.

PLANT PATENT

Most new rose introductions are patented. This means that, during the 17-year period when the patent is in force, the patent holder and the rose's hybridizer receive a small percentage from the sale of each plant. A patent provides a strong guarantee that plants you purchase will be well-grown and true to name. It also stimulates research and hybridizing, since the hybridizer is assured of some financial reward for his work.

ROSE STANDARD

Commonly called a "tree rose," a standard is just a bush rose budded high on an understock stem. Sizes vary greatly—from miniature standards on foot-tall stems to 2-foot patio standards, 3-foot regular standards, and even 6-foot weeping standards featuring flexible-caned ramblers.

ROOT STOCK

The rose that furnished the root system to plants propagated by budding.
In New England it is usually Dr. Huey.

SEMI-DOUBLE

A semidouble rose flower contains roughly between 8 and 20 petals, arranged in more than one layer but still opening flat to show stamens in the blossom center.

SINGLE

A rose flower that consists of five to eight petals is said to be single. The petals are arranged in one layer around a single boss of stamens.

SPORT

A change in growth habit or flower color that may occur suddenly on an established variety. A climbing form of a bush variety typifies a growth sport; Chicago Peace, a pink and orange blend, is an example of a color sport found on a plant of the normally light yellow and pink Peace.

SUCKER

Any growth that arises from below the bud union on a budded plant. This growth is that of the understock and should be removed, as it will drain the energy of the rose.