



Newsletter Landscaping and Trails Committee

High Desert Gardening

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Reset Your Irrigation Controller Program

Summer is almost here with warmer temperatures and longer days of intense sunshine. Now is the time to reset your irrigation controller program to meet the increased needs of your landscape plants for water. As you read the chart (Figure 1), note the frequency and depth of watering listed for different types of plants. For example, flowering plants should be watered 2 times per week to a depth of 12 inches. This is the schedule recommended by the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority for June-August for our area. Figure

| WATER BY THE SEASONS SUMMER WATERING RECOMMENDATIONS (JUNE - AUGUST) FOR GREATER ALBUQUERQUE | | |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| Plant Type | How Often? | How Deep? |
| TREES | 1 TIME PER WEEK | 24" INCHES |
| SHRUBS | 1 TIME PER WEEK | 18" INCHES |
| FLOWERING PLANTS | 2 TIMES PER WEEK | 12" INCHES |
| DESERT ACCENTS | 2 TIMES PER MONTH | 12" INCHES |
| GROUNDCOVER | 1 TIME PER WEEK | 8" INCHES |
| GRASS: TURF (COOL SEASON) | 3-5 TIMES PER WEEK | 6" INCHES |
| GRASS: TURF (WARM SEASON) | 2-3 TIMES PER WEEK | 12" INCHES |
| GRASS: ORNAMENTAL | 1-2 TIMES PER WEEK | 18" INCHES |
| VINES | 1 TIME PER WEEK | 12" INCHES |

=MONTHLY =WEEKLY

Figure 1. Summer watering recommendations.

From the 505Outside website:
https://www.505outside.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/WBTS_all4_Final_OL_for-PRINT_7_5-x-6.pdf

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Deadheading Roses, Flowering Annuals, and Perennials

Sharon M. Douglas

A question that many people ask when their roses start to look a bit messy or a particular perennial looks faded....should I deadhead?

What is deadheading? Deadheading is a term used by gardeners that refers to the process of removing faded or dead flowers or seed heads from a plant. This process, neglected by many homeowners, can be quite beneficial.

Deadheading is considered a form of pruning that has two specific goals: 1) to neaten or tidy a plant to make it more attractive and 2) to increase and promote re-flowering as well as a longer period of flowering. The process is simple and can be done at almost any time—as flowers fade, they are removed. There are two basic ways to remove spent flowers: you can simply twist them off by pinching the stem under the bloom with the index finger and thumb, or you can use a pruning shear or flower snip. If using the latter, your pruning shear or snip must be clean, sharp, and preferably a by-pass type (think scissors) (Figure 1) rather than an anvil type.



Figure 1. By-pass pruner (left) and by-pass flower snip (right) (Photo by S. M. Douglas)

Regardless of the technique you use, when deadheading roses, thick cloth or leather gardening gloves are very helpful.

Deadheading Roses

A common type of rose found in many yards and common area landscapes in Mirehaven is the modern shrub rose, including the “Knock Out®,” “Drift®,” and “Oso Easy®” series (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Knock Out rose in need of deadheading. (Photo by B. Duncombe)

Although some modern varieties are self-cleaning—and deadheading not necessary—these plants will generally bloom more and have a neater appearance if spent flowers are removed (Figures 3 & 4). Deadheading removes a spent flower, at the base of which is the developing rose hip or fruit/seed pod of the rose. When you remove the hip before it has a chance to develop and ripen, you keep the hip from sending hormones to the plant that slow down and inhibit flower production. Many gardeners choose not to deadhead some roses at the end of the season—this leaves the developing hips on the plant to provide some winter interest and color as they turn orange to red when ripe.



Figure 3. Close-up of spent flowers in various stages. (Photo by B. Duncombe)



Figure 4. Spent rose flowers that should be deadheaded. (Photo by B. Duncombe)

- Pinch Method- this simple method involves pinching or twisting off the spent or fading flowers. With this technique, little to no stem is removed in the process.
- Pruning Method- pruning shears are used with this method of deadheading. With this method, you need to look carefully at the leaves under the spent flower. The first few leaves under the flower usually have 3-leaflets (Figure 5). Follow the stem down to where the leaves begin to have 5-leaflets (Figure

6)—this is where you will make your deadheading/pruning cut. The reason is that this is where the stem is in a vegetative (active) stage of growth, so the plant will likely send out a new shoot to produce flowers.



Figure 5. Example of a 3-leaflet rose leaf. (Photo by B. Duncombe)

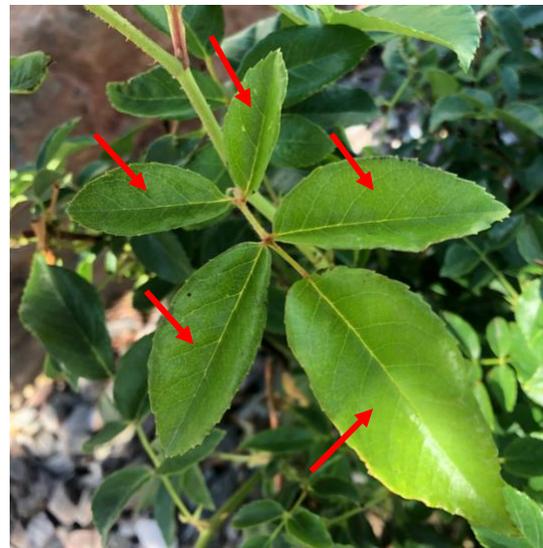


Figure 6. Example of a 5-leaflet rose leaf. (Photo by B. Duncombe)

The deadheading cut should be made to the stem at the first 5-leaflet leaf with an outward facing bud (Please refer to the Mirehaven LTC article on pruning in the March 2021 Issue of High Desert

Gardening for more information about outward facing buds.), or to a new side-shoot, if one is already present and growing. The cut should be made at a 45° angle and ~¼ inch above the leaf or side-shoot. *If the rose is a new transplant (1st year in the ground),* deadheading cuts should be made to the stem at a 3-leaflet leaf in order to minimize the number of leaves that are removed, since these leaves are important for photosynthesis to help with establishment and growth of the new transplant.

Deadheading Flowering Annuals and Perennials

Deadheading flowering plants helps to redirect energy from seed production to root and vegetative growth. Once a plant has finished flowering, it begins to form seeds and the flowering process is temporarily suspended—the plant starts to direct its energy and resources to the development of the seeds (Figure 7) .



Figure 7. Spent geranium flower (left) that needs to be deadheaded and developing new flower buds (right). Arrow points to correct place to cut. (Photo by S. M. Douglas)

By removing spent flowers, you stop seed development and the plant uses its resources to produce another bloom.

Deadheading can be done by removing a single stem, such as for Coreopsis (Figures 8 & 9) and Geranium, by removing faded clusters of flowers, such as for Yarrow, or by removing faded flower spikes, such as for Veronica.



Figure 8. Coreopsis before deadheading. (Photo by S. M. Douglas)



Figure 9. The same Coreopsis plant after deadheading. The plant is more attractive and will continue to set more flower buds. (Photo by S. M. Douglas)

However, there are some situations where the seeds are desirable—plants that have

seeds that birds love such as Sunflower, Lupine, Cardinal flower, Penstemon, Blanket flower, Prairie rocket, Hummingbird trumpet, Blue columbine, Desert marigold, Desert paintbrush, Larkspur, Beeplant, Coneflower, Evening primrose, and Phlox. Another reason for deadheading some flowers is to minimize self-seeding—this process results in unwanted volunteer plants the following year. A few examples of plants that are known for self-seeding are Columbine, Salvia, Zinnia, Marigold, and Catmint. On the other hand, in some situations, self-seeding may be considered a good thing, if you want to promote natural spread in a particular area. There are also a few perennials that should not be deadheaded, since they reseed for the following year—these include Hollyhock, Foxglove, Cardinal flower, and Forget-me-not.

There are also situations where perfectly healthy flowers should be removed from plants. Although this is “technically” not deadheading, since the flowers are fine when removed, it is helpful to keep the plant in a vegetative growth stage. An example is Coleus, a plant that is grown for its colorful foliage rather than its flowers. Other examples are herbs, where flower spikes of Basil (Figure 10), Parsley, and Cilantro are removed to encourage the vegetative growth stage for continued production of flavorful leaves.

- **Pinch Method**- this simple method involves pinching or twisting off the spent or fading flowers. With this technique, little to no stem is usually removed in the process, although headless flower stems can be unattractive.
- **Pruning Method**- pruning shears or snips are used with this method of deadheading. With this method, follow

the stem back to a side-shoot or to the base of the stem and make a clean cut. It is important that you don't inadvertently cut off developing flower buds in the process of removing the spent flowers.



Figure 10. Basil with flower heads that should be deadheaded. (Photo by S. M. Douglas)

Deadheading Shrubs

Although deadheading shrubs isn't as important as deadheading roses, annuals, and perennials, it can help to make plants look more attractive and can promote better root and vegetative growth—this is especially true for young plants. All deadheading cuts should be made just behind a faded cluster or flower spike.

Spent flowers on spring flowering shrubs such as Lilacs should be removed right after flowering but before seed pods develop and ripen. However, deadheading will not lead to a repeat bloom, since flowers are formed on one-year wood.

Deadheading of old flowers or developing seed pods of summer flowering shrubs, such as Crape myrtle, Vitex, and Oleander, are more likely to produce a second flush of flowers after the first flush is finished. All deadheading cuts should be made just behind a faded cluster or flower spike.

There are no hard and fast rules for deadheading—you, as the gardener, can set or make the rules for your own landscape.

Videos

There are many videos on the internet that show how to deadhead roses and all types of flowers—we don't want to endorse any particular one, but they are easily found by a simple search. With that said, as follows are

links to two videos from universities rather than individuals or companies.

Deadheading Annuals and Perennials
<http://extension.msstate.edu/southern-gardening/video/2015/deadheading>

Deadheading Roses
<https://extension.msstate.edu/extension-stories/video/2017/deadheading-roses>