

Common Rose Problems

A basic guide to common ailments and pests that can bug your rose bushes



Symptoms

Small green insects on buds and new growth; paper-like skins on lower leaves

Speckled leaves of faded tan color; undersides of leaves appear grainy with fine webbing

Buds have holes, causing yellowing, bent neck, or death. Opening blossoms may look chewed or hole-punched.

Flecked petals and deformed blossoms. Tiny, sliver-like insects hide in the folds of flowers.

Leaves marked with cream-colored stippling

Hole bored through the center of a pruned cane. Tunneled canes sometimes result in dieback

Cause

Aphids

Spider Mites

These pests invade stressed plants.

Rose Weevil

(aka Rose Circulio)

A small, red beetle with a black snout

Thrip

Rose Leafhopper

Found on the undersides of leaves; small, green, wedge-shaped insect

Stem-Boring Sawfly

A pest that lays eggs into canes; larvae eat through canes

Solution

Blast mild infestations with strong hose spray. Prune heavier infestations or use insecticidal soap.

Alternate treatments of neem oil, a miticide, or soapy water to prevent resistance. Severe cases may require pruning.

Hand pick or prune damage. Apply systemic insecticides.

Prune blossoms. Apply a systemic once a month during the growing season.

Prune most infected areas. Apply a systemic insecticide.

Prune affected canes back to solid section; seal cut end with white liquid glue

Symptoms

Cause

Solution

<i>Semicircular cutouts of leaf material along edges</i>	Leaf-Cutter Bee	These insects don't actually eat the leaves, nor do they harm them. They can be a nuisance to some, but there isn't an effective remedy.
<i>Leaves eaten from underneath, given a skeletonized effect</i>	Roseslugs Small, globular sawfly larvae; look like bird droppings	Treat with horticultural oil applied to undersides of leaves.
<i>White, powdery fuzz on leaves, stems, and buds</i>	Powdery Mildew	Apply a systemic fungicide for short term remedy; wait to water until soil has dried down
<i>Black, circular spots with fuzzy edges on leaves or canes</i>	Black Spot Worsened by frequent watering and humidity; highly contagious	Water in early morning hours to allow leaves to dry during the day; Treat with neem oil; Remove affected leaf material
<i>Orange dots on leaf surfaces; undersides have powdery orange spores</i>	Rust Highly contagious	No insecticidal remedy. Prune and dispose of affected areas
<i>Yellowing or paling of leaves, often near the base of the plant</i>	Under/Overwatering	Water thoroughly rather than frequently. Allow soil to dry somewhat before watering. This can be a root cause for most problems on this list.
<i>New growth, flowers, and buds eaten; broken canes</i>	Deer	Use alternating deterrents like Bobbex and Deer Away to assure deer don't build tolerance. Consider putting up physical barrier fencing, or planting barrier plants like lavender and sage.
<i>Skeletonized leaves; total defoliation; holes in and around flower buds</i>	Japanese Beetles	Prevention: Add nematodes to soil Defense: Neem oil, Beetle Gone, hand pick from plants See our handout on Japanese Beetle