

From Old Roser's Digest, September, 2002

First method: Take a 12" stem with just-bloomed rose removed. It should have 4 to 6 leaves. Take off all but the top two, the stem at the top cut just above a node, the bottom just below one. Best results probably if cutting is taken off where it joins the cane, different cells there, but not always possible. With a razor blade or sharp knife, cut into bottom of stem quartering it; go up at least half an inch. Some shave off bark for an inch on either side of the cutting near the bottom. You can dip cutting in water, then put them in Rootone or other rooting product. Make a hole in medium so powder stays on cutting; insert cutting. Medium varies. You can use builder's sand, very coarse. Potting soil is adequate. Some spray bed with a fungicide or prevent mildew and blackspot. Do not over water as cuttings can rot. You can put a large glass container over cutting, or if many, add a plastic cover. We are told to use softwood cuttings in summer, hardwood in winter. Old-timers say to stick cutting into soil near 'mother plant' as the cutting is more likely to survive. Any friable soil will do. An old aquarium works fine if it leaks, is easy to cover. Remove cover if cutting starts to mildew.

A far out method worked here. Prepare half a dozen cuttings. Use no Rootone. Place in zip-top bag with wet newspapers squeezed into balls, 3-4 of them. No medium. Close bag, place in refrigerator until slips appear to callus, might take a month. Flatten bag before sealing to remove most of the air. When callused or white roots form, remove and plant in good soil or kitty litter.

The Journal of England Royal Horticultural society wrote up a method: Take cuttings from young, healthy bushes. Here, July or September would be fine. Prepare as usual. Rooting medium is sand, loam, and peatmoss, 3-1-1. Place a 4" pot inside a 6" one. Add pebbles of broken clay pot parts for one inch under the 4" pot. There will be 1" all around outside the smaller pot. Fill that space with the medium and wet well. Insert cuttings in this space. You water inside the smaller pot. Roots should form in 6 to 8 weeks. Cuttings may be left in place, inner pot removed, space filled with soil. When cuttings well rooted, remove and plant in the ground. This works best if posts were first in a plastic bag or in a cool, shady spot.

The simplest method which has met with mixed success is to cut a rose in full and glorious bloom. Leave it in water to enjoy it. Cut rose off when it dies, leave in water until roots form. Worked for our grandmothers.

I recall long-time Old Rose enthusiastic, Mary Ann Green, taking a hammer and pounding the bottom of rose cuttings. That worked for her. Some now prepare cuttings, place in a sealed plastic bag containing a medium that is wet, and using a clothespin, tack them up in a tree where they will get filtered sunlight.

When collecting cuttings away from home, place in a well-soaked peat pellet, place in plastic bag or wrap in damp newspaper. A picnic hamper is fine for storage. Cuttings may be left in the peat, put into a pot of soil until well established.