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Growing Raspberries in Your Garden – Quick Reference Guide

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Choosing where to plant your raspberries:

Raspberries are most productive and vigorous when grown in full sun (6+ hours of direct sunlight per day). However, they tolerate part shade (3 to 4 hours of direct sunlight per day). It is important to plant raspberries in soil that is well-drained, as they do not tolerate pooling water or excess moisture around their crown or roots. In general, raspberries are quite adaptable to various soil conditions, but prefer slightly acidic soils that are rich in organic matter.

Planting your raspberries:

Work the soil in your selected planting location with a fork or shovel to loosen it. If your soil is not particularly fertile, you can amend the soil with compost, aged manure, or mushroom soil. Peat moss is also a valuable amendment because it is acidic and helps soften compacted or heavy soils. Generally, most gardeners will prepare a bed in the fall, and plant raspberries the following spring. However, this can be done spring, summer, or fall and you can plant immediately after creating your planting bed.

If you only want to grow 1 raspberry plant, you can choose any spot that is easily accessible so you can harvest fruit and tend your plant. If you plan on planting multiple plants in rows, they should be spaced 2 to 3 feet apart in rows that are at least 2 feet wide and spaced 6 to 8 feet apart. Sod can be maintained and mowed easily in strips between rows if they are spaced properly; this also allows for plenty of room to maneuver in the rows to harvest, prune, etc. Consider mulch to suppress weeds. Because black raspberries can carry viruses that red, purple, and yellow raspberries are susceptible too, they should be planted separately. Keep black raspberries at least 75 feet away from other varieties to prevent the spread of viruses.

Fertilizing your raspberries:

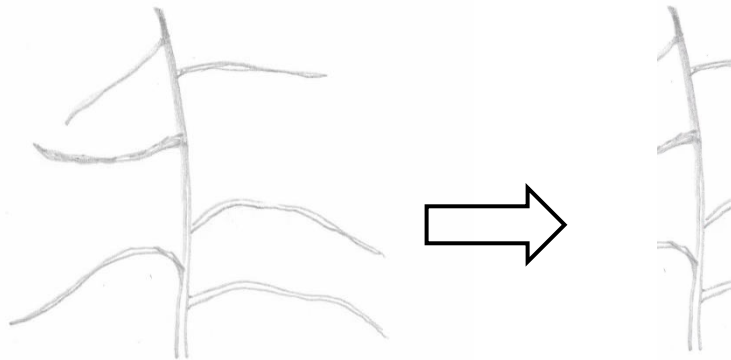
If your soil is enriched with organic matter, your plants do not need much additional fertilizer to stay happy. A 10-10-10 general purpose fertilizer can be applied in spring, according to label, to encourage strong, new growth and greater productivity.

Pruning your raspberries:

This is the trickiest part because different raspberries need to be pruned differently. However, once you learn which pruning technique is appropriate for your variety, its quite easy to maintain them!

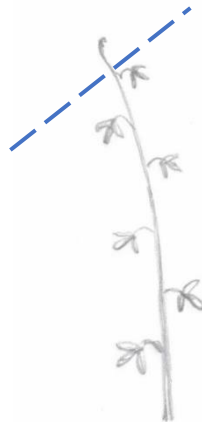
Spring (late winter) pruning black raspberries:

(Removing long side shoots to encourage a flush of new growth in spring)



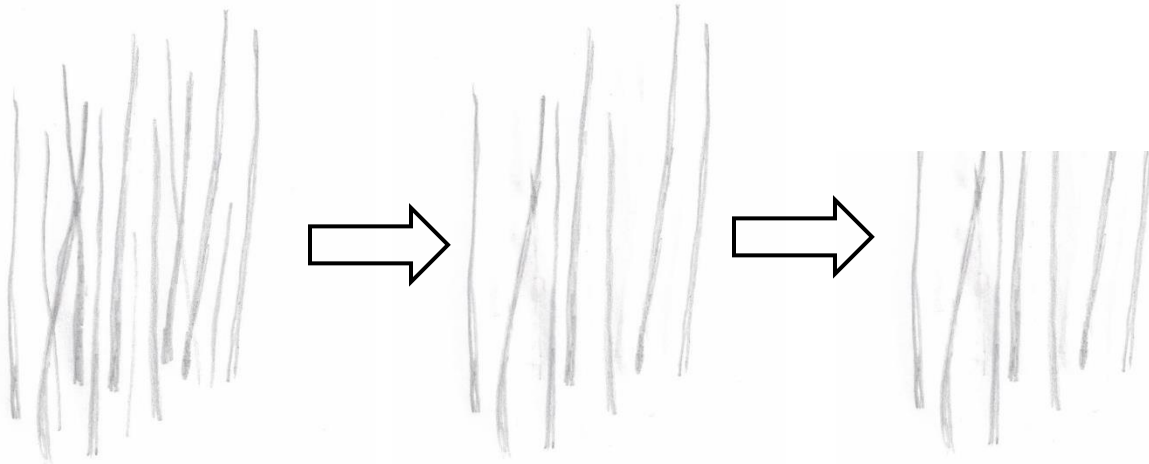
Summer pruning black raspberries:

(Removing tips once canes reach 36 to 48 inches long to encourage side shoots)



Spring (late winter) pruning “everbearing” red raspberries:

(Everbearing raspberries produce a small summer crop on the primocanes, or previous year’s growth, and a large fall crop on the floricanes, or current year’s growth. Primocanes are thinned in late winter, removing all dead or damaged braches, and their tips pruned off. Fruit will occur on the side shoots of the primocanes in summer, usually around late June to mid-July.)



Summer pruning “everbearing” red raspberries:

Once the primocanes have finished producing around late July, they should be cut all the way to the ground. By this time, you will notice the fresh floricanes have reached nearly full size. Pruning the spent primocanes will direct all energy to the growing floricanes and allow for the largest potential harvest in fall. Floricanes should not be pruned at all during their first growing season, and should not be pruned in summer.

Trellising your raspberries:

Because some raspberries, such as black raspberries, have a trailing habit many gardeners choose to trellis them with. The most simple and effective trellis is a simple construction of stakes pounded in the ground every 6 feet or so along the row with 3 to 4 wires or lines of twine running between the stakes. As the raspberries grow, simply place the shoots over the next wire or twine to keep them up. This makes harvest and weeding easier!