



Growing Grapevines



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PLANTING BASICS

- Plant grapevines 8 ft. to 10 ft. apart.
- Do not dig the hole too deep. It is best for the root ball to sit on undisturbed soil.
- In clay soils, the top of the root ball should sit just about surrounding grade.
- In sandy soils, your grapevine can stay at grade.
- Remove the RootPouch completely from the root ball. If your plant was recently potted, put the whole bag in the planting hole, and then reach down and cut off all of the bag you can reach. This prevents newly growing roots from being excessively disturbed, shocking the plant.
- Use any excess soil to build a berm around the root ball to hold in water as vine becomes established. We recommend top-dressing new fruit-bearers with an inch or so of composted manure, whether from a bag or a farm. Do not mix amendments into the planting hole, as this will make the roots stay in just the planting hole and it may take longer for the roots to extend into surrounding soil. Top-dressing allows nutrients to trickle into the root system each time a tree is watered.
- Mulch with bark or a similar material to retain moisture and root temperature. Keep the mulch from piling on the trunk.

PRUNING

- Immediately after planting, cut down to 2 or 4 active buds. Waiting a few weeks, select the most vigorous of these and allow only a single vine to grow upward, removing all others throughout the first growing season. Train the shoot upward, using a stalk or trellis system.

WATERING

- The goal when watering your new grapevine is to keep the roots moist, but not too wet. Between waterings allow the ground to become slightly damp without being completely dry, so that air is available to the roots. As many, or more plantings die by drowning from overwatering, as from drought. A grapevine's roots grow out laterally more than they grow down, and they need both air and water. So how do you know how much to water? Let the soil drain and dry slightly between watering. Put a finger down in the center of the root ball. If the top of the finger feels dry but the bottom moist (not wet), it's time to water. Each time you water (or it rains) the soil should be wetted deep rather than shallowly. Again, this encourages the roots to grow down.

PROTECT FROM DAMAGE

- Rabbits love new tender grape plants! Protect with fencing or repellants, especially in winter.

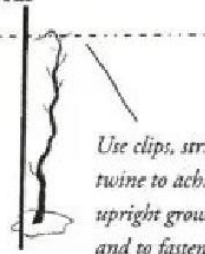
First Year



Maintain only a single vine during the first year by removing excess shoots as they develop. Continue to tie young growing vine to stake or trellis.

Second Year

Train onto support or arbor

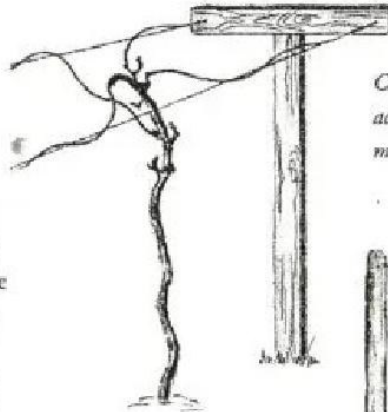


Use clips, string or twine to achieve upright growth and to fasten vines.

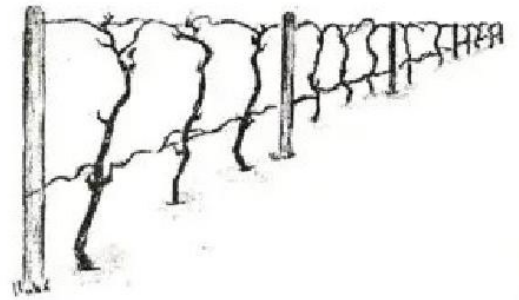
Pruning Grapes

There are two basic systems of pruning grapes—cane pruning and stick pruning. Both systems accomplish the same purpose which is removing excess or nonproductive vine to stimulate the production of high quality fruit.

Avoid trellising that makes vine management difficult, such as woven fence or hog panels.

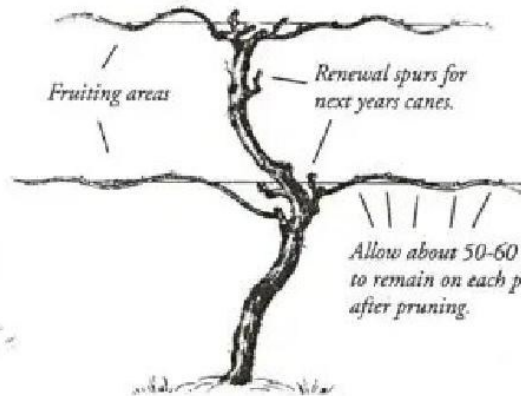


Cane pruning is best accomplished in single or multiple wire arrangements.

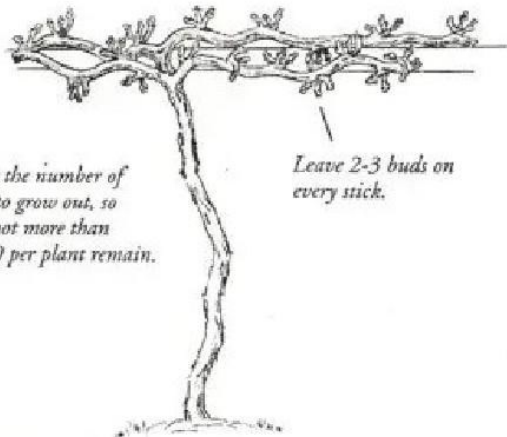


Cane Pruning

Cane pruning annually replaces the entire fruit-bearing cane with one that grew the current summer. After one season is completed, remove the entire length of the fruited cane except for 2-3 buds at the base, which form the renewal spurs for a new vine the following year.



Allow about 50-60 buds to remain on each plant after pruning.



Limit the number of buds to grow out, so that not more than 50-60 per plant remain.

Leave 2-3 buds on every stick.

Stick Pruning

This method consists of shortening or cutting back the newest growth of the current year to 2-3 buds. Stick pruning promotes a more dense foliage canopy and can be used where shade is desired. Compared to cane pruning, it is more time-consuming. Stick pruning is probably more suited for arbors.