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Passionate for Pets, Plants & People

Raspberries

Botanical name: Rubus

Plant type: [Fruit](#)

USDA Hardiness Zones: [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)

Sun exposure: [Full Sun](#)

Soil type: [Any](#)

Soil pH: [Slightly Acidic to Neutral](#)

Raspberries are naturally inclined to grow in cooler climates, although the development of adaptable varieties has made it possible for gardeners to grow raspberries in many zones. They are relatively easy to grow, and with proper care, can bear fruit indefinitely. Don't limit yourself to the common red raspberry; try growing purple as well!

There are two types of raspberries, both with their own specific requirements for growing. Summer-bearers bear one crop per season, in summertime. Ever-bearers bear two crops, one in summer and one in fall.

Planting

- Plant in the early spring (or late winter for warm zones)
- Plant far from wild growing berries, otherwise risk the spread of pests and diseases to your garden.
- Prepare soil with compost or aged manure a couple weeks before planting.
- Raspberries love moisture, so try soaking the roots for an hour or two before planting.
- Dig a hole that is roomy enough for the roots to spread.
- Space plants about 3 feet apart, in rows 8 feet apart.
- After planting, cut back canes, leaving 8 to 10 inches.
- Depending on the variety you plant, you may need to fashion a support. A trellis or a fence are good options. If you chose to use one of these, establish them at or before time of planting so the plants are not disturbed when maturing.

Care

- Mulching is important throughout the season to conserve moisture and suffocate weeds. Keep a thick layer of mulch surrounding plants at all times.
- Water one inch per week.
- The roots send up an abundant amount of shoots, called canes. Keep order by pruning away the majority of them so that the survivors can produce lots of berries.

Pruning

Summer-Bearers produce berries on two year old canes while one year old canes grow right beside them. You shouldn't have trouble telling which is which: the older canes have brown stems, and the young ones are still green. Prune only the older ones, the ones that have finished their fruitful year.

- Prune in the fall. Leave about 6 of the thickest, strongest green canes.
- Keep plant contained to a 19-inch wide space. Left alone without care all summer, neat rows will become thickets.
- Cut off all canes that grow sideways.

Ever-Bearers require less care:

- Mow them to the ground in the fall, after you finish picking. (For a small patch, pruning shears will do.)
- Clean up all debris—diseases and pests overwinter.
- Pruning is not required during the growing season unless you want to keep a uniform order.

Harvest/Storage

- All varieties will begin to produce fruit in their second season. In some cases, ever-bearers may bear small berries in their first autumn.
- In early summer, berries will ripen over a time of about 2 weeks. You will need to pick berries every couple of days.
- Try to harvest berries on a sunny day when they are dry.
- Don't tug too hard on your raspberries when picking. A ripe raspberry will leave the vine willingly.
- Raspberries can be kept refrigerated for about 5 days.
- If the fruit is to be made into preserves, it should be done straight off the plant.
- Raspberries can be frozen. Make a single layer of berries on a cookie sheet. When frozen, place into airtight bags.