

Growing GUIDE



BLACKBERRY/ RASPBERRY



**PLANTING
DEPTH**
12-8"



**WATER
QUANTITY**
Moderate



**SUN
QUANTITY**
Full Sun



**PLANTING
PROXIMITY**
2-5' Apart



**HARVEST
SEASON**
Summer-Fall



**HARDINESS
ZONES**
4-8, depending
on variety

BLACKBERRY/RASPBERRY PLANTING GUIDE

With heavy yields of large, firm fruit, Blackberries and Raspberries are so delicious and perfect for eating fresh, freezing, or making jelly that they're worth dealing with a few thorns. Trained against a trellis or kept to a more compact shrub form, they'll start rewarding you with basket after basket of succulent berries in their second year. Some varieties are summer-bearing; some are everbearing and will produce fruit over a longer period. The vines are hardy to Zone 5 (Blackberries) or Zone 3 or 4 (Raspberries) so harsh winters are no barrier to a bountiful harvest. Read on to learn how to plant, grow, and care for Blackberries and Raspberries with our comprehensive guide.

SUCCESS TIPS

- Harvest the berries once they ripen and become fully colored. Keep harvesting each day as the berries will deteriorate quickly or become food for the birds if left on the vine.
- Don't prune the first year except to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood.
- Cut the canes of summer-bearing varieties down to the ground at the end of the first fruiting season. Those canes won't bear fruit again and removing them encourages new canes to grow.
- Pinch back the lateral branches of everbearing varieties by 3–4" at the end of the first fruiting season. Those canes will fruit again in early summer.
- Prune each spring to leave just 5 or 6 of the strongest canes and cut them back to about 30" high.
- Mulch the canes in winter with a 12-inch layer of straw or leaves in areas that experience hard freezes.

WHERE TO PLANT

Blackberries and Raspberries need full sun but will appreciate some afternoon shade in hot-summer areas. They require excellent drainage and can rot if they end up in soggy soil. In areas with heavy clay soil, it's best to plant in a raised bed. They're most productive in slightly acidic soil, so they benefit from the addition of organic matter.

WHEN TO PLANT

Plant shrubs in the spring after the last frost. In warmer regions where frosts are uncommon, bare-root plants can go in the ground in the fall.

HOW TO PLANT

- **Find a location with full sun or afternoon shade** with well-draining soil. If you notice that water still puddles 5 to 6 hours after a hard rain, it's best to find a different spot or amend the soil with organic matter to improve drainage.
- **Install a trellis** or other support structure for vining varieties, which can grow to about 5' high. More compact, shrub-like varieties don't require support.
- **Plant your Blackberry or Raspberry** at the same soil depth as it was in its nursery container, spacing plants 2–5' apart, depending on the variety. Pat the soil firmly around the roots.
- **Water thoroughly** after planting to settle the soil around the roots.

HOW TO GROW

- **Water deeply** every week; 1–2" of water is a good estimate. Avoid letting water pool around the plants, which can lead to rot.
- **Add a light mulch** of compost to the surrounding soil to improve drainage and keep competing weeds at bay.
- **Apply a granular fertilizer** in the spring before the leaves emerge.
- **Select the best 5 or 6 canes** of vining varieties and train them onto the support structure. For the clumping, shrub-like varieties, keep the canes about 3 feet long.



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