

Strawberries can produce abundant crops in soil-filled pots and planters. Small alpine strawberries are perfect for small containers.



What do I need to know about growing raspberries?

Raspberries come in red, yellow, black and purple varieties. Some varieties are everbearing and some are summer bearers. Red and yellow raspberries multiply rapidly by suckering in all directions. They are a good choice for growing in 2-foot-wide hedgerows. Black raspberries do not sucker and propagate only by tip rooting. These can be limited to smaller hills. Purple raspberries can be similarly limited, although some will sucker and fill in the row.

Although raspberries are naturally adapted to cool climates, varieties have been developed for virtually all parts of the country. So buy a variety that is suitable for your area. To avoid disease problems, don't dig up plants from a friend; instead buy certified virus-free plants from a nursery.

The plants can tolerate light or heavy, but not wet, soils. They do best in rich, loose soil with plenty of organic matter and a pH of 5.5 to 6.8 — 6.0 is ideal. Before planting, eliminate all the perennial weeds from the site and mix manure or 10-10-10 into the soil.

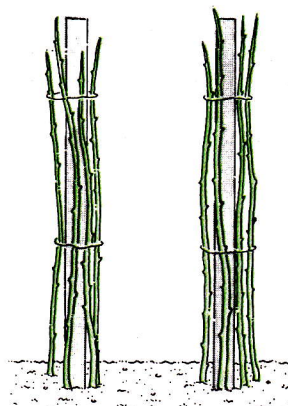
The plants you buy will come bare-rooted or in pots. Soak bare-rooted plants in water for an hour before planting. Cut the canes back to 2 inches above the ground level to encourage new growth and balance the roots. Space the plants 2 to 3 feet apart in rows 6 to 7 feet apart.

You may want to set stakes or posts every 2 to 3 feet along the row and attach wire beginning 3 feet from the ground. Then you can train the canes to grow along these supports. Whether trellising is necessary depends in part on the variety and how you prune. Most varieties grow 5 to 6 feet tall or more and become laden with berries. It is often easier to manage the plants if they are trellised.

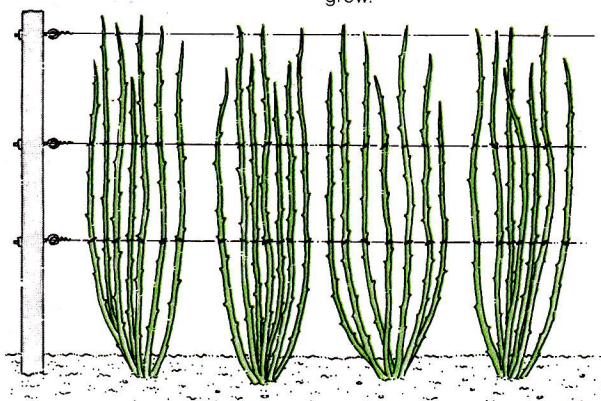
The roots of a raspberry bush are perennial, but the canes are biennial, meaning they grow to their full height in one year, fruit the next year, and then die. So your pruning must take this into account.

Summer bearers send up canes in the spring that grow during the summer, initiate buds in the fall, and become the fruiting canes the following year; then they die. Prune these raspberries during the dormant season — late fall is a good time. Remove dead canes that have just fruited and any weak or damaged new canes. Then, with red, purple, and yellow varieties, cut the canes back to 4 or 5 feet. Leave the healthiest canes spaced 4 to 8 feet apart in a hedgerow or leave about six canes per hill. Black raspberries should also be summer topped; that is, 2 to 4 inches should be trimmed off the top of new canes when they are about 2 feet tall. This promotes strong lateral shoots that will bear heavily the next year.

Everbearers can be treated just as the summer bearers, but it is harder to distinguish the new canes from the old. The way to recognize the new canes (those that bore a fall crop) is that they will have lateral, or side, buds only at the tips of the canes, while the old canes will have these buds farther down. If you prefer a larger fall harvest at the expense of the summer crop, cut the canes down to within 2 inches of the ground before growth starts in the spring.



Where space is very limited, one raspberry plant can be set on either side of a sturdy post and up to nine strong canes tied to it.



Economical use of space can also be made by growing raspberries in a single row along a fence. Space the plants about 18in apart and tie the canes in to the fence as they grow.