

BLACK SPOT OF ROSES

Diplocarpon rosae

Symptoms & Damage

- Round black spots (0.1–0.5") form on upper leaf surfaces with fuzzy edges and yellow halos
- Infected leaves turn yellow and drop prematurely, typically from the bottom up
- Young canes may show purple-red blisters that later blacken

Cause

- Fungus spores overwinter on fallen leaves and infected canes
- In spring, spores spread via splashing water and wind during cool, wet periods, then germinate after prolonged leaf wetness (~7h)
- Secondary spread occurs through repeating wet cycles

Prevention & Cultural Controls

- Plant in full sun with good air circulation; avoid overhead irrigation.
- Promptly remove and destroy infected leaves and canes; do not compost
- Apply mulch to reduce soil splash
- Choose resistant rose varieties (e.g., old garden and shrub roses)

Treatment Options

- **Organic Solutions**
 - Regularly clear fallen leaves and prune infected material in dry weather
- **Chemical Treatments**
 - Begin applications of chlorothalonil, mancozeb, or copper-based fungicides at bud break and continue every 7–14 days through wet seasons
 - Rotate fungicide types to prevent resistance
- **Best Time to Treat**
 - Preventive sprays: start at bud break in early spring and after heavy rain.
 - Active infection: treat at first sign of symptoms and maintain through humid periods

Plant(s) Affected

- All rose types are susceptible; hybrid teas, grandifloras, and miniatures are especially vulnerable
- Disease undermines plant vigor, bloom production, and hardiness

Additional Notes

- Though black spot doesn't kill plants immediately, severe defoliation makes roses more prone to stress and winter damage

