If the Queen doesn’t flower much the first two years, well, she’s busy setting in....

Build roots, then height.

6,000 ft. And now, apparently, we are expected to share our secrets. Sigh.

A few of the following varieties may turn up in local nurseries. Others await at Harlequins Gardens, near Boulder. Most will need to be liberated from online nurseries. Use wwwHelpMeFind.com/roses to research this list (zone, size & color), and locate U.S. mail order sources.

Among the many nurseries we’ve used are High Country Roses (a local source in Arvada), Northland Rosarium, Heirloom Roses, Rogue Valley, and Chambliss’s Rose Nursery. You will usually receive a yearling, own-root plant that likes first-summer attention and may not really take off for three or four seasons. Plant the own-root branch point an inch or two below soil level.

Climbing roses appreciate uncompacted organic soil that drains well. They need six hours of sun to do their best, and prefer eastern morning sun. Younger plants should only be pruned to remove dead or damaged growth. If the Queen doesn’t flower much the first two years, well, she’s busy setting in. Give them organic fertilizers (we love Mile-Hi Rose Feed® and their other products - alfalfa meal and kelp meal), which produce healthier plants and better flowers.

Oh – and water, enough early on to get them established. Keep your soil moist but not flooded. Older roses may need less than you think. Mulch helps to stabilize soil conditions and reduce water loss. Be patient with your babies. Build roots, then height.

Climbing roses grow long structural canes that must be tied to a structure. Use material that will not cut into or girdle the canes (never wire or twist ties). Train horizontally or arch them to encourage the bud eyes at each leaf axil to sprout short laterals, or “blooming” canes.

Once-blooming climbers usually put on a June display that makes you forgive their lack of repeat (prune them after flowering). For those with Japanese Beetles, the flowers finish them after flowering. For those with ‘Alchymist,’ ‘Constance Spry,’ ‘Fred Loads,’ ‘Ispahan,’ ‘Kordes’ Superior™,’ and ‘Super Elfin,’ ‘Ilse Krohn’ (don’t pronounce it, just plant it). Try zone 3 ‘Cape Diamond,’ as well as zone 5 ‘Colette’ (the Romantica) and ‘Composer’ as low climbers.

A word on the popular David Austin English roses… Some do not like our climate. Others may get all moody from yard to yard. Keep trying. Among those taller fragrant varieties worthy of a shot on a

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**Fragrant Climbing Roses**

Dave Ingram
& enthusiasts of the Denver Rose Society

A h, the dream: a trellis, or an arbor over a walkway, covered with fragrant roses! The Queen of Flowers, thriving in your garden. Mmmm.

But we live in Colorado with its unique, dream-breaking climate. Long winters. Sudden freezes. So where should we look?”

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A word on the popular David Austin English roses… Some do not like our climate. Others may get all moody from yard to yard. Keep trying. Among those taller fragrant varieties worthy of a shot on a
pillar, post, or sunny trellis are ‘Teasing Georgia’ and ‘Eglantine,’ along with old favorites ‘Graham Thomas,’ ‘Tess of the d’Urbervilles,’ and ‘Abraham Darby.’ If they struggle with training, move them carefully to a spot where they can thrive as shrubs.

If you find yourself helplessly in love in front of the grafted climbers at a local nursery, we’ve been there. Avoid any that say “zone 6.” Others, such as ‘Don Juan,’ and ‘Autumn Sunset’ (a color sport of the fine trainable shrub ‘Westerland’) may wind up in your car. The key to grafted roses is to plant the top of the graft union 2 to 4 inches below the soil level (our best secret). And a mound of mulch at the base each winter is smart.

Let us close with the heartbreak climbers, roses that only succeed in a few protected areas of the Front Range. These would include such popular varieties as ‘Fourth of July,’ ‘America,’ and ‘Climbing Iceberg.’ Old Man Winter may damage the others, but he often destroys these. Will they work for you? We don’t know. Sometimes the Queen holds her mysteries close to her heart. If you succeed (they will be spectacular!), brag to everyone until you are locked up. If they fail, try the others we’ve listed above.

Because to us a garden without the Queen of Flowers is, well, just a garden.