



EDIBLE  
GARDENING  
SERIES

# Grapes

Grapes are self-fertile unless otherwise noted. They generally produce fruit 2 to 3 years after planting. They grow 12 to 15 feet tall and wide. Flowering in May and harvest time is generally in late August to October. Some grapes have seeds and some do not. Grape vines generally yield 20 to 30lbs per plant. Their hardiness ranges from -10°F to -30°F.

## PLANTING

Plant 6 to 8 feet apart. We recommend **Gardner & Bloome Soil Building Compost**, **Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer** and **Bonide Root n Grow**. See our **Planting Guide** for more information. Full sun to part shade.

## FERTILIZING

Fertilize in the spring at leaf break with **Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer**.

## SUPPORT SYSTEM

Erect a trellis to support your grapes. For a good support system 7- or 8-foot post should be buried 2 feet deep, spaced at 8-foot intervals. Run the bottom wire at 3½ feet from the ground and the second wire at 5 feet from the ground.

## TRAINING

Select the most vigorous cane to train up a stake as a trunk. At the end of the first season or whenever the cane gets tall enough, head (cut) the leader back just above the bottom wire to encourage branching. Select a shoot to train along the bottom wire in each direction plus on more to grow up in the center let the three canes grow for a season. In the winter keep one cane on each side of the trunk. Prune those canes to about 15 buds or 2 feet each and tie to the bottom wire. Prune the third cane to three buds.

In the spring each of the buds will produce new canes; fruiting shoots will be produced from about the fourth bud on. As they grow, create a third line of support by weaving some twine around the shoots, half way between bottom and top wire. Fasten the shoots to the top wire as they get there.

The following winter and each winter there after prune off the cane that produced the fruiting shoots, and replace with a new cane that grew from the three bud spurs you made last winter. Prune the third shoot to three buds (this will produce the replacement canes & spur for the next season). Then tie the selected shoots down to the bottom wire & prune each to about 15 buds or 2 feet.

## PRUNING

Grapes produce fruit on one year old wood. Best time to prune is between mid-December to March after the vines has been dormant for least a month. Why prune? To space out shoots to allow sunlight penetration to the fruit, to allow spray applications to reach the fruit and inside of the canopy, to allow air circulation in the canopy to lower chance of rot and mildew.

## MULCHING

Apply 2 to 3 inches of **Soil Building Compost** around each grape plant. This will help with weed control, moisture control and supply some nutrients to the grape plant.

*Please turn the page for more information.* ➡

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## NETTING (BIRD CONTROL)

To protect your grapes from wildlife (birds) net your grapes.

## HARVESTING

Grapes are usually harvested September to October. Grapes are usually ready to pick 1 to 3 weeks after turning color, but that also a lot to do with variety. If you are growing seeded grapes the seeds are can help you determine ripeness. If seeds are green or light tan the grapes are usually not ripe. Ripe grapes have brown mature seeds. Another way to determine ripeness is the ease with which berries can be pulled off the cluster. Ripe grapes can be pulled from the clusters with little resistance.

## USES

Fresh eating, juice, jams, wines & making raisins.

### CHECK LIST

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grape Plants                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bonide Root n Grow              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Building Compost        | <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Earth Fruit Tree Fertilizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Earth Starter Fertilizer | <input type="checkbox"/> Twine                           |