



# Columbia Nursery

## Raspberry Planting & Care Guide (Zones 3–5)

Raspberries are a productive, cold-hardy berry crop that thrive in USDA Zones 3–5. With proper site selection and care, they produce delicious fruit for fresh eating, canning, and freezing.

### General Growing Guidelines

- Sunlight: Full sun (6+ hours/day)
- Soil: Well-drained, fertile, loamy soil; slightly acidic (pH 5.5–6.8). In heavy or clay soils, mound soil 4–6” above ground level to improve drainage.
- Spacing:
  - Summer-bearing: 2–3 ft between plants
  - Everbearing: 3–5 ft between plants
  - Rows: 6–8 ft apart
- Pollination: Self-pollinating, but benefit from pollinators
- Mulch: Retains moisture, suppresses weeds, and protects shallow roots
- Root Care: Raspberries have shallow, fibrous roots and are sensitive to waterlogging and compaction. Avoid planting in soggy or high-traffic areas.

### Raspberry Care

- Types:
  - Summer-bearing: Fruit once on 2nd-year canes (floricanes)
  - Everbearing (fall-bearing): Fruit on current-season canes (primocanes); can produce a small second crop if not fully cut back
- Support: Install a permanent trellis system with wires or T-posts to support canes and promote airflow
- Pruning:
  - Summer-bearing: Prune spent canes after fruiting. Remove to ground level.
  - Everbearing: For a single large fall crop, cut all canes to the ground in early spring. For two crops, selectively prune only part of each cane.
  - Always prune flush with the soil to prevent disease
- Weed Management: Keep the planting area weed-free for the first two years to ensure successful establishment
- Watering: 1–2 inches/week. Avoid overhead watering—drip irrigation or deep hand watering is preferred
- Harvest: Begins mid-to-late summer depending on variety

### Watering, Fertilizing & Mulching

- Watering: Keep moisture consistent during establishment and fruiting
- Fertilizer:
  - Use balanced 10-10-10 once canes have leafed out
  - Avoid fresh manure or high-nitrogen fertilizers to prevent excess vegetative growth
- Mulch: Apply 2–4” of straw, shredded leaves, or wood chips. Helps suppress weeds and keep roots cool



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## ❄ Winter Care

- Remove trellis ties in late fall to reduce breakage from snow load
- Mulch well around root zone to protect against freeze-thaw cycles

## 🌸 Tips for Zones 3–5

- Choose hardy cultivars: 'Latham', 'Boyne', 'Heritage'
- Net during ripening to protect from birds
- Use raised beds in heavy soil
- Expect best yields by year 3–4
- Raspberries freeze well for long-term storage

## 📅 Planting Timeline (Zones 3–5)

Activity	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Plant dormant bare-root	May 15–June 1	May 1–May 20	April 15–May 10
Plant potted stock	Late May	Early May	Late April
Prune existing canes	Early spring	Early spring	March–April
Fertilize & mulch	Late May	Early May	April

## 🚫 Common Raspberry Issues

Issue	Likely Cause	Solution
Poor fruiting	Overcrowding or shade	Prune and provide full sun
Yellowing leaves	Poor drainage or pH issue	Test soil, amend pH, and improve soil
Suckering	Normal growth habit	Dig and transplant or mow between rows
Winter dieback	Exposure to wind/frost	Mulch well and use windbreak fencing