

Planting a Rosemary Hedge

Most upright rosemaries make a very fine hedge. The hedge can be informal if the plants are left to grow naturally or for a more formal hedge the rosemaries can be clipped. When clipping rosemary do not cut back into old wood. We recommend trimming after flowering and in late summer. Do not prune or trim in autumn or winter.

Replacing a box hedge?

If you are replacing a box hedge you should try and remove as many of the old box roots as possible and replace the soil with fresh topsoil mixed with coarse limestone grit (6:1).

To ridge or not to ridge?

If your soil is on the heavy side it is beneficial to plant the rosemaries in a prepared low ridge about 10cm high and 15cm wide. For the ridge you will need a mixture of 4 parts of your soil, 2 parts of John Innes No 2 or 3 (or an equivalent peat-free potting compost) and 1 part of coarse limestone grit.

For light free draining soils the slight mound is not necessary. However, the addition of a good potting compost at planting will help moisture retention during dry spells and help the young plants establish their roots.

Planting your hedge

Before planting each plant should be well moistened (but not waterlogged).

Lay out your plants along the length of the hedge and ensure that the spacing is even. There are two methods of laying out your hedge:

1. Straight row - simply lay the plants out in a line
2. Staggered row - lay the plants out in two slightly offset.
This results in a denser hedge, especially if the spacing between plants is reduced.

Although we always try to supply plants of uniform sizes some variation in size is inevitable, when laying out your hedge ensure plants of mixed sizes are randomly distributed. They will soon grow and even out.

Dig a hole a few cm wider and deeper than the root ball. Fill the hole with water and leave until all the water has drained away. Add your planting mix to the bottom of the hole to ensure the plant is just proud of the soil surface, fill in around the plant with the planting mix, firm down so the plant is now level with the soil surface.

Aftercare

In dry conditions water the soil around the plant, but do not over water. You can always add more water. In the first few weeks after planting take particular care with the watering especially if the weather is dry.

When the rosemaries are showing good growth, typically after three weeks, trim them back lightly to encourage bushy growth.