

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Blackberries

Fruit plants are not grown from seed, but from transplants, roots or crowns. This can provide a bit more difficulty for the at-home gardener, but blackberries are one of the easiest fruits to grow. Blackberries can grow just about anywhere in the United States as long as they receive enough sun exposure.

To plant:

Blackberry plants are grown from a crown and roots and they are self-fertile, so multiple plants will not be needed to produce the fruit. When planting blackberries, if the cultivars are semi-erect, space plants 5 to 6 feet apart. If they cultivars are erect, space them 3 feet apart. For trailing varieties, space plants 5 to 8 feet apart, and rows for all should be spaced 8 feet apart. Plant the blackberries shallowly. Planting should be done in early spring so cold winter months don't kill the transplants.

To grow:

Mulch the blackberry plants throughout the season to deter weeds and retain moisture. Spread a thick layer of mulch around the base of the plants. Blackberries like plenty of water, especially when the berries are ripening. Be sure the blackberry plants receive at least 1 inch of water per week. For trailing varieties, add a trellis or a type of support system for the vines. One of the best ways to provide a support system for blackberry plants is to add a two-wire system, with the top wire running 5 feet above the ground and the bottom wire running 18 inches below the top wire. Fruiting floricanes will be along the wires after the first year of growth. Train any new



[Cheyenne Blackberry plants available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

primocanes into a narrow row below the fruiting canes. It will be simpler to direct all canes into the same direction. Primocane growth is vegetative, but floricanes produce fruit. Floricanes will die back each year.

Blackberry plants must be pruned. After trailing varieties produce fruit, remove the floricanes to the ground, but wait to do so until they have already died back a decent amount. This will push more nutrients to the roots and crown of the plant. Primocanes don't require pruning. For non-trailing varieties, once primocanes reach 4 feet, remove the top 4 inches. This will produce a bushier plant with more yields in the future.

To harvest:

Blackberries are ready to pick once they are fully black. Keep the central plug within the fruit when picking the berries, which is different when picking raspberries. Blackberries should be harvested during cooler parts of the day, and they will only last a few days after harvest.



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What blackberries crave:

Fertilize blackberries in the early spring with an all-purpose, 10-10-10 or 16-16-8 fertilizer.

Where to buy blackberry plants:

Urban Farmer's blackberry plants are thornless for easier picking and produce large fruit.

Check out our blackberry selection on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Blackberry plants available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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