



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

CHRISTMAS ROSE CARE

LIGHT

Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger*) prefers a cool, sheltered position in partial shade. Protect it from intense sun and drying wind. Despite its common name, outdoor flowering in cold climates often occurs in late winter or early spring. It is a garden perennial, not a warm-room houseplant.

WATERING

Keep the root zone moderately moist while roots establish, but never waterlogged. Check moisture before watering, especially in cool weather. Excellent winter drainage is essential. Container plants need drainage holes and occasional checks during thawed weather; do not water frozen soil or leave a pot standing in water.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use humus-rich, freely draining soil and plant at the original nursery-pot depth. Avoid low spots where snowmelt collects. Improve drainage before planting; a raised position may help on heavy soil. Allow the labeled mature spacing and keep compost mulch away from the crown.

FERTILIZING

Avoid heavy feeding. A light compost top-dressing is often sufficient in a fertile garden bed. Use a soil test to determine whether fertilizer or lime is needed instead of adding either automatically. Follow product directions and avoid cultivating deeply around the sensitive roots.

LEAVES & FLOWERS

Retain healthy evergreen foliage. Remove old, brown or diseased leaves individually in spring as fresh growth develops, taking care around buds. Fading white flowers may become pink or green naturally. Remove spent flower stems before seed ripens if you do not want seedlings.

SEASONAL CARE

Acclimate greenhouse-grown flowering plants gradually before exposing them to outdoor cold. In Maine, container roots need protection from severe freezing; planting a hardy selection in the ground is usually easier for long-term care. Temporary frost droop may recover after thawing. Hellebores are poisonous if eaten; wear gloves when pruning.