

California Blackberry

Rubus Ursinus



General Information

- Edible sweet-tart fruits
- Sun Exposure: Full sun, Part shade
- Water needs: Moderate to High
- Cold Tolerance: Tolerates cold to 0 degrees F
- Days to harvest: Once available to harvest, pick every couple of days.
- Harvest season: Late spring through summer, depending on variety

Planting Guide

- 3 types of CA blackberries: erect, semi-erect, and trailing
- Time of year to plant: Plant during early spring, when canes are dormant. In warmer climates, can also be planted in late fall.
- Location: sunny spot with well-drained soil and away from wild blackberries that can cause disease for your plants
- Spacing: For erect types, plant 3 feet apart, for semi erect types, plant 5 to 6 feet apart, for trailing types, plant 5 to 8 feet apart. Make sure all rows are 8 feet apart.
- Mulch: Keep a thick layer of mulch around plants at all times (~3 in.) to conserve moisture
- Plant shallowly, around 1 inch difference from when they were planted from the nursery
- Propagating Blackberry Cuttings:
 - Best to use leafy stem cuttings from an established blackberry plant
 - Use a cutting that is near the edge of a healthy bramble
 - Cut off 4-6 inches of the leafy cane stems to use as your cutting
 - Cut during the fall dormancy period



- **Steps to Propagate: Preparing for Propagation**
 - When preparing a rooting container, fill 8 inch pots with a mixture of milled peat, perlite, and coarse sand
 - Then, pour water into this mixture until the mixture is completely saturated
 - Lastly, let the water drain out for 10 minutes, then poke a 4 inch deep hole into the center of the mixture
 - Immediately after cutting, rinse the cuttings
 - Bundle cuttings together and store in 40 F cold temperature in a dry area or in the fridge
 - Dab the severed end of the cutting in IBA rooting hormone talc
 - Put the blackberry cutting into the pot to meet that 4 inch deep central hole.
- **Steps to Propagate: During Propagation**
 - Make sure to place these pots outside to a cold frame. Make sure this frame has ventilation within it.
 - The water technique to use here is to mist the cuttings, using a spray bottle and making sure to clean the bottle before using. Make sure not to add too much water so the cuttings don't rot. Do this twice daily.
 - After a month, move the pot into a shaded area.
 - After 3 weeks from this time, gently pull on the cutting to make sure the roots have established themselves
 - After making sure the roots have established themselves, after 2 months you can now move the plant to a 1-gallon nursery container that's filled with equal parts loam, compost, and coarse sand.
 - In the summer, make sure to grow the blackberries in a lightly shaded area and water them to a depth of 2 inches once every week.
 - Day by day, expose the plant to more and more sunlight until it can stand for 8 hours without the leaves scorching, similar to this image:
 - Around October, transfer the planting from the nursery container to the ground or planting bed with acidic, fast draining soil.
 - Add structures to help aid the blackberry's growth.



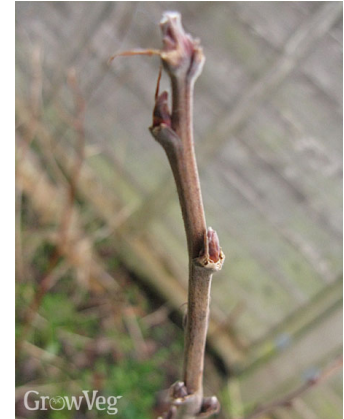
Care Guide

- **Irrigation**: Make sure plants have 1 inch of water per week, and potentially more in warmer temperatures

- **Fertilizer:** Fertilize in early spring with all purpose fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 16-16-8
- **Wiring:** For trailing types, use wiring for further plant support. Use a two-wire system, with the first wire being 5 to 6 feet off the ground and the other 18 inches below the first.

- **Pruning:**

- Start pruning two years after initial planting
- Pruning seems to be all year round, with one part of the season being the most important pruning time
- Two times during the year: Spring and Summer
- Best pruning time is early summer, so in the months of **May and June**
- Winter Pruning:
 - Can also prune in winter to promote more fruit the following harvest season by removing dead fruit wood
 - Cut off dead canes and branches using a clean pruning shear



- Spring Pruning: Tip Pruning

Pruned Stem

- Use clean, sharp pair of pruning shears (make sure to clean with disinfecting wipes or spray after each plant)
- In this kind of pruning, we are cutting off the tips of the blackberry canes
- Cut back the canes to about 24 inches, and if the cane is shorter than 24 inches, just prune off the top inch of the cane
- Summer Pruning: Clean Up Pruning
 - After the blackberries are done fruiting, cut off the canes that already grew berries since they won't be able to bear fruit again
 - You can tell the canes that bore fruit apart from the rest by looking at the space between each leaf on each part of the stem. If the spaces are very short, then that means that that branch had just bore fruit. **Note:** This applies only to floricanes blackberries, which bear still green fruit during the summer and are the most common type of blackberries. Primocane blackberries have a longer spacing between their leaves and don't bear fruit in the summer.
 - Cut off using clean pruning shears, at **ground level**, any canes that bore fruit this year

Sources:

[Planting, Growing, and Harvesting Blackberries](#)

[Pacific Blackberry](#)

<https://homeguides.sfgate.com/time-year-trim-blackberry-vines-61074.html>

<https://www.growveg.com/guides/how-to-prune-blackberries-and-raspberries/>

<https://homeguides.sfgate.com/grow-blackberries-cuttings-48501.html>