

Blackberry Trellis Instructions

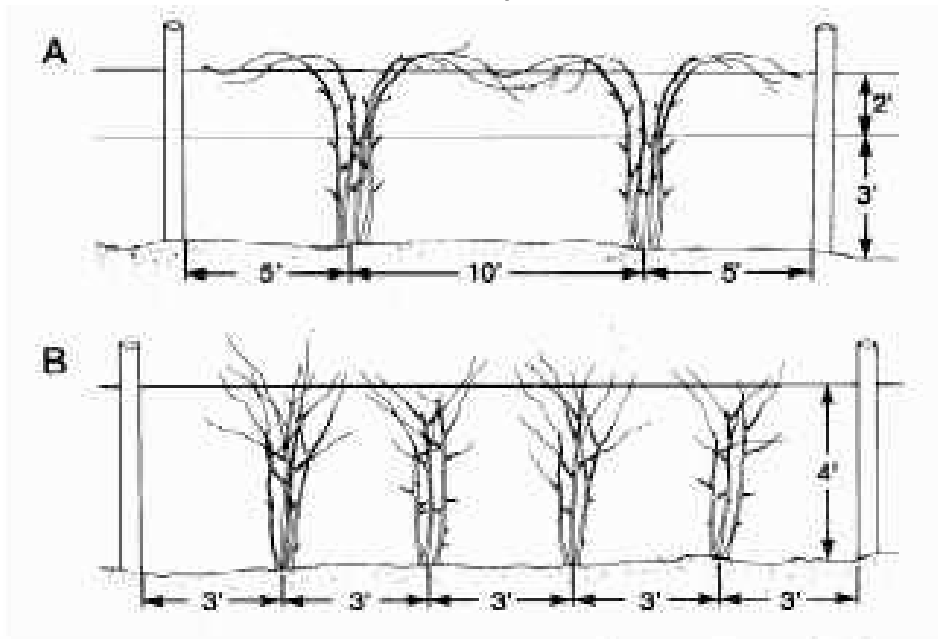


Figure 1. (A) Train trailing plants on a two-wire trellis. (B) Train erect to a one-wire trellis

Pruning and Training:As the new canes begin growing along the ground in the Spring, they may be moved in alongside the row from time to time to keep them out of harms way until they are ready to be trained. These canes will not bear fruit until the following summer when they are two years old. After harvest, the two year old fruiting canes are removed as close to the ground as possible without injuring the new canes.

In mild climates like the Willamette Valley, many of the hardier varieties may be trained to stakes or trellises in late summer or early fall after the fruiting canes have been removed. The one year old canes are easier to handle in the fall as opposed to the following spring, and if trained well ahead of the first hard frost, they will mature better than canes left to lie on the ground through the winter. The Thornless Evergreen is an exception as it is harvested late and must be spring trained.

In cold climates, Spring training is a must as canes left on the ground over winter are less apt to be damaged by cold. The ideal time to spring train is after the danger of freezing weather and before the leaf buds begin expanding.

Several systems are used in training trailing blackberries. The simplest for the home gardener is a stake with a cross arm about five feet high. Canes should be brought up either directly from the ground or spiraled around the stake and held in place with two or three ties of strong twine. Twine may not be necessary if canes are looped over the cross arm and the ends twined into the canes below.

Various innovative methods of training are used with wire trellises. The most common trellis has two wires, one five feet high and the other three feet high. The canes to be trained are divided into two parts, and each taken separately to the top wire, and then the canes are brought down to the lower wire and turned back toward the plant with one or two twists. Excess cane length can be removed.