

# An Almost Invisible Deer Fence - Easily Removable & Reusable

## Consulting Rosarian Report

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You can discourage deer from entering your rose garden and still maintain a nice view of the garden roses by constructing an almost invisible deer fence made by using strands of thin low visibility green fishing line strung on green garden stakes. The fence blends in with the green leaves of the roses and any other green stakes used to support roses in the garden. When you look at the garden from a distance, it is hard to see that there actually is a fence. The green stakes look like they are supporting roses and the green fishing line is hard to see. (See Figure 1.)

I use five rows of Stren Lo-Vis Green 12 lb. fishing line strung on six foot long x 5/8 inch diameter green garden stakes. (See Figure 2.) The stakes are appropriately placed, about eight to ten feet apart, along the periphery of the rose garden that I am protecting. The five strands of fishing line rows are about 8-12 inches apart with the lowest line about 12 inches above the ground and the highest about four to five feet above the ground.

**Theory behind the Fence:** The theory behind the fishing line fence is that when the deer touch the fishing line (which they may or may not see), they get "spooked" and prefer to go another way. Of course if a herd of deer are running they could easily run right through the fence and knock it down. But it has been my experience to date, that the deer do not go through the fishing line fence. I first learned of this technique many years ago when I visited the house of a man who lived at the edge of the woods in Bucks County, PA near New Hope. He had a lawn made completely of moss that was shaded under the trees in his back yard. In order to keep the deer from tearing up his moss lawn, he used a fishing line fence around his back yard to "spook" the deer and it worked well for him. I think he used a single line. Since then, I have experimented with the fishing line fence from time to time. I live in a wooded area and a few years ago I decided to build a short fence to block one entrance to my back yard from one of the paths in the woods behind my house. Inadvertently, I left a big gap between the bottom fishing line and the next line up, a gap of about two feet or so. One day, I noticed that a doe and a fawn had entered my back yard from an unblocked side entrance to the back yard. When I went outside to see what was going on, the deer were standing near my short fishing line fence. The large doe looked at the fence and then she turned away and quickly went out of the back yard another way. However, the little fawn looked at my fence and quickly jumped right through the large gap between the two lower rows of fishing line. This taught me a lesson, that if I want to keep the little fawns out, I need to have the distance between the rows of fishing line small enough to impede the entrance of small deer.



Fig 1. Almost Invisible Deer Fence -  
Can you see 5 strands of Low Visibility 12 lb. fishing line?



Fig 2. Garden Stake and Stren Lo-Vis 12 lb Fishing line

**Deer Fence Construction:** The fence is made by appropriately placing green garden stakes along the periphery of the garden and encircling it. Rows of low visibility green fishing line are run between the stakes and each line is tied to a stake as it passes by. (The use of a fisherman's knot, which is used by fishermen to tie a fishing hook to a fishing line, is somewhat helpful here to tie a line at each starting point.) Six foot or taller stakes, about 8-12 feet apart with five or more rows of fishing line seem to be appropriate. Periodically along the fence line, make removable entrance doors to the garden. (See Figures 3 & 4.) This can be done by ending the rows of fishing lines by cutting each line after tying it to a garden stake and then by placing another stake right next to the one you just ended the fence on, about an inch away. Next place a another stake at about 3-4 feet away and use these two stakes to make a removable door. Tie about 5 parallel fishing lines between these two stakes. Use a strap loop made of something like Velcro Tape (available from GardensAlive.com) or some similar material to hold each doorway stake to its adjacent stake in the main fence. (See Figure 4.) To open the door, you need only to remove the Velcro loop on one of the door stakes and move that stake out of the ground and to the other side to provide an opening to the garden for yourself and visitors.

A note about the hard to remove SKU sticky labels on the garden stakes. The garden stakes are available from several sources including Home Depot and Lowe's. For some reason, the garden stakes from Home Depot have the sticky labels on the pointed end of the stake while the garden stakes from Lowe's have the disadvantage of having the sticky label on the non-pointed end. Since the pointed end of the stake goes into the ground, there is no need to remove the label from the Home Depot stakes since the labels will be underground and will not be seen. However, if you use the Lowe's stakes with the hard to remove sticky label on the non-pointed end, you will have to spend a lot of time removing the sticky labels or else you will have the unsightly appearance of labels at the top of your fence stakes and it will no longer be a nearly invisible fence.

The Stren Lo-Vis Green 12 lb. fishing line is available online from amazon.com as well as from other sources of fishing equipment. If you prefer a stronger fishing line, Stren also offers a 20 lb. line.

**Deer Fence Removal and Reuse:** The Deer Fence is easily removable and reusable. If you make the fence in sections, then when the rose season is over, if you want to, you can take down the fence by removing the stakes from the ground one at a time and carefully rolling up the fishing line onto the just removed stake. Put a tag on each rolled up fence section to identify where its position is in the overall fence in the garden. If next spring, you decide to put the fence up again, you will not be bothered with having to make the fence again, avoiding the time consuming job of tying all of the fishing lines to the stakes. Just unroll the fence sections and use the identification tags to place the stakes in their proper place in the overall deer fence.



**Fig 3. The Removable Doorway on the Left Provides a Gateway to the Garden, when Temporarily Removed.**



**Fig 4. Close-up of poles at one side of a Gate to the garden. Gate is Temporarily Held Closed with Removable Velcro Loop. The Fence is Made Using Stren Lo-Vis Green 12 lb. Fishing Line strung on 6 ft x 5/8 in Green Garden Stakes.**