

MIND YOUR MULCH

How to Apply Mulch¹



Not So Close!

Watch where you spread your mulch. Getting too close to some plants and buildings can cause them major damage. Heed these mulch buffer zones.



Wise Watering²



Water your plants with drip irrigation 3 to 4 hours every other day.

TIME TO BE PICKY³

Will one of these 13 common mulches work in your garden beds? The answer could affect your garden's success.

Material	Resists Compaction	Attractive	Resists Wind	Readily Available	Fights Weeds/Disease	Low Fire Risk
Compost	●	●	●	●	●	●
Leaves	●	●	●	●	●	●
Cocoa Bean Hulls	●	●	●	●	●	●
Grass Clippings	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pine Needles	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wood Chips	●	●	●	●	●	●
Shredded Bark	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sawdust	●	●	●	●	●	●
Hay/Straw	●	●	●	●	●	●
Landscape Fabric	●	●	●	●	●	●
Black Plastic	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gravel	●	●	●	●	●	●
Manure	●	●	●	●	●	●

COOKED JUST RIGHT⁴

Making your own mulch in the form of compost? Aim for these results:

pH: 5.5-8.0

Moisture: 35-55%

Texture: The **COARSER** the better to suppress weeds and prevent wind erosion.

Where to Mulch⁵

- Around new trees
- Garden beds
- Crop fields
- Trails
- Driveways
- Play areas
- Natural areas

UNDER COVER⁶



Mulch Calculator

Not a numbers person? Use our calculator to determine your mulch needs in cubic feet.

Step 1: How big is your garden area?

width here: x length here: =

radius here: $3.14 \times$ $^2 =$

base here: x height here: $\div 2 =$

Step 2: How deep do you want your mulch?

Enter your answer here:

Step 3: Calculate your needs.

\leftarrow Step 1 Answer

\times \leftarrow Step 2 Answer

$=$

This is how many cubic feet of mulch you need!

Stop Volcano Mulching Your Plants!

Placing mulch too close to the trunk of a tree and too thick around the base can cause long term damage and possibly permanent damage.

Click on the links below to watch two very informative videos on the proper way to mulch.

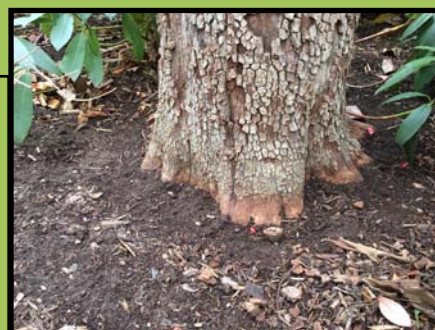
Land Designs Unlimited, John Holden, UCONN graduate in Ornamental Horticulture

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnjMOCMwUoM>

This Old House

<https://www.thisoldhouse.com/how-to/how-to-properly-mulch-around-tree>

For those who have heard Garry Nedorostock(sp) talk about too much mulch around tree trunks. This is the damage he was talking about! This is even still too much! This is a dogwood on Colton Street island.



Troubleshooting⁷



Mulch Toxicity

Spot It: The not-so-lovely smell of vinegar or sulfur is wafting from your garden beds.
Fix It: Test your pH—toxic mulch will be between 1.8 and 2.5. To prevent, turn your mulch twice monthly for good aeration.



Slime Molds

Spot It: Did patches of fungus in colors like orange and yellow emerge after a summer rain? You've probably got slime mold.
Fix It: Scoop it and toss it. No harm done.



Artillery Fungus

Spot It: Small cream or creamy brown cups are firing spore masses guerilla-style on your plants, car or home siding.
Fix It: Use only pure bark mulch or cover existing mulch with pine needles.



Matted Mulch

Spot It: Threadlike fungi are growing in dry spots.
Fix It: Water your mulch frequently. If the mats are too big, take a claw cultivator or rake to it!



Stinkhorn Fungi

Spot It: That's right, these mushrooms stink!
Fix It: Use pine needles, pine bark or compost instead of hardwood mulch.



Toadstools and Mushrooms

Spot It: They look edible, but they're not.
Fix It: Get these outta the garden quick, before your child or dog start noshing and get sick.

Common Mulching Mistakes⁸



Too thick



Too thin



Too close



Doesn't extend to plant dripline



Not composted properly



Plastic used under mulch around trees/shrubs



Weeds not eradicated before application

1. http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/other/compost_mulch/hgic1604.html
2. <http://apple-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/drought/mulches.html>
3. <http://extension.missouri.edu/pdf/g960>
4. http://compostingjournal.org/admin/wp-content/plugins/wp-pdftupload/pdf/1330/Field_Guide_to_Compost_Use.pdf

5. <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/garden/02214.html>
6. <http://pubs.ent.vt.edu/430/430-019/430-019.html>