

WHAT DO I DO WITH...?



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2016

“Composting is the single most important task of the organic gardener or farmer because the health of the soil depends on the composting treatment it receives, and success in gardening and farming depends on the health of the soil.”
Rodale



INTRODUCTION TO MULCH AND COMPOST

3 Main Points

- ✎ Mulch and compost are essential to a sustainable and ‘Green’ landscape.
- ✎ Mulch is anything that goes on top of soil to control weeds and conserve moisture; Compost is fully decomposed organic material that improves the soil
- ✎ Recycling plant trimmings into mulch and compost will make healthier plants with fewer pests, and will save water, money, and time

Nature



oak woodlands
6" mulch



avocado orchard
abandoned 50 years
3-4" mulch



olive orchard
abandoned 100 years
2-4" mulch

Nature



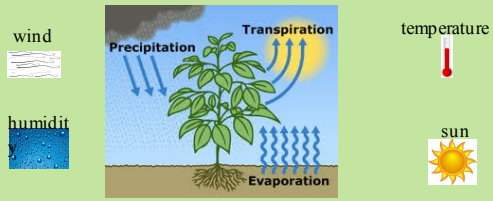
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Why mulch?



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Mulch conserves moisture



evapotranspiration (ET_o)

Water conservation



Mulch suppresses weeds



Mulch moderates soil temperature

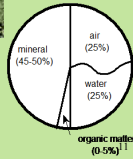


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Mulch prevents compaction



Compaction caused by high traffic.



Mulch prevents soil erosion



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Organic vs Inorganic



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Organic mulch feeds the soil



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Organic mulch materials



straw



manure



wood chips



living mulch



plant material

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Inorganic mulch materials



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Making your own mulch



Safety First!



Mulch application area



6 inches from trunk



12 inches from building

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Mulch application depth



2-6 inches mulch depth
depending on size of mulch material
and purpose for mulching
(thicker for weed suppression)

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Barrier under mulch



overlap at least 8 inches

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Border



Lose the lawn



Sheet mulching





“Sheet Mulch” for controlling weeds

- ✎ Clear the area where you want to control weeds
- ✎ Place two layers of cardboard or 15-20 sheets of newspaper over the area
- ✎ Wet the cardboard or newspaper well
- ✎ Place 4-6 inches of compost of mulch on top of the wetted layer
- ✎ Keep the mulch/compost at least 12 inches from building surfaces and 6 inches from trunks of trees, shrubs, or plants
- ✎ Apply mulch/compost annually to keep layer thickness in place



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Mulch as decorative fill



What’s wrong with this picture?



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What's wrong with this picture?



28

What's wrong with this picture?



29

What's wrong with this picture?



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Compost as mulch



Grasscycling



Mulching mower



Or don't cut more than a third



Healthy soil = Healthy plants =
Healthy people



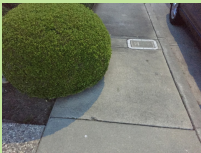
Creative uses for yard not-waste

?

Leave in place



RPRP
Reduce waste with
Right Plant Right Place



Use again and again



Plant support



Crafts



Wine products



Leaf mold



Scatter old seeds



Christmas tree



Education



Show and tell



?



Stumped



This IS yard waste!



Last resort



Happy Gardening!