

Why Mulch?

Mulches provide many benefits to plants, as well as making landscapes more attractive, usable and reducing maintenance.

- Controls weeds. You spend less time weeding and your plants don't have as much competition for water and nutrients.
- Keeps the soil moist.
- Keeps soil temperatures more even — warmer at night and in the fall, cooler during the day, and in the summer.
- Adds nutrients as it decomposes.
- Reduces top soil loss by wind and rain erosion.
- Prevents soil compaction.
- Help to reduce some plant diseases.

Some good materials to use as mulch include shredded bark, compost, newspapers, untreated grass clippings, leaves, cocoa shells, and pine needles.

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Additional Resources

Why Mulch?

- UW-Extension Publication A3383, *Mulches for Home Gardens and Planting*, at <http://learning-store.uwex.edu/Mulches-for-Home-Gardens-and-Plantings-P378.aspx>
- UW-Extension Fact Sheet XHT1121, *Wood mulch and Tree Health*, at <http://hort.uwex.edu/articles/wood-mulch-and-tree-health/>

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