



feeding the self

Mulch

What is it?

Mulch is dead, decaying and drying plant matter. Leaves, grass, twigs or sticks are what make up your average mulch pile.

What is it for/ what does it do?

Mulch does several things for a growing garden:

- 1) When underneath the garden bed, it gives structure to the soil and provides a layer to hold minerals, water and nutrients important for a growing plant.
- 2) When put on top of the garden bed, it protects the soil from leeching, which occurs when rain water drains important minerals and nutrients below the level of the growing plant's roots.
- 3) As mulch is decaying plant matter, minerals and nutrients lost are replaced as the plant matter decomposes back into the soil.

How do you use it?

There are two primary ways to use mulch:

- 1) When you dig down (or build up) to prepare a garden bed for growing, put a thin layer of mulch down then cover it with the soil you will be growing in.
- 2) Cover the top of garden bed (soil) with a thin layer of mulch, around the growing plants/vegetables.

What is the best source?

Instead of discarding (throwing away) the grass you cut when mowing a lawn, or getting rid of those drying leaves that fall during the winter, move them all to a quiet corner. Also if you use twigs or sticks then remember to break them up as it will turn the garden material into usable mulch faster.

So remember to **use mulch** in your garden.
It works!

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