

USING MULCH AROUND TREES AND PLANTS Tips and Techniques

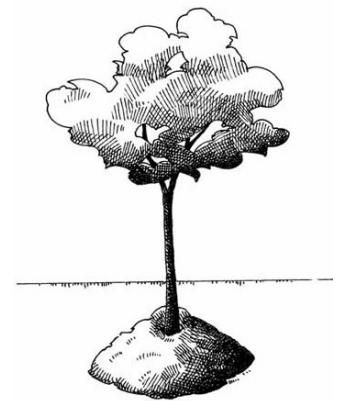
- Check soil drainage in the area to be mulched. Determine if there are trees or plants that may be affected by the type of mulch. Most organic mulches work well in most landscape situations. Some plants may benefit from mulches such as pine needles or bark that acidify the soil.
- Apply a 2-4 inch layer of mulch over well-drained soils. Use a thinner layer on poorly-draining soils.
- Do not pile mulch against the tree trunk. Pull mulch back several inches from the trunk so the base of the trunk and root crown are exposed. The mulch ring should resemble a “doughnut” not a “volcano.”
- If mulch is already present, check the depth. Do not add more if a sufficient layer is in place, instead rake old mulch to break up matted layers.
- Composted wood chips are best used around young trees and tender plants. Fresh wood chips are best used around established trees and shrubs and to define beds and walkways.



Properly mulched tree: 2-4 inch layer of mulch away from base of tree and extending to the tree's drip line if possible.

Avoid over-mulching! Piling mulch against the tree trunk or too high can:

- Lead to excessive soil moisture and root rot
- Cause inner bark tissue to die
- Lead to insect and disease problems
- Become a matted barrier that prevents the penetration of water and air



Improperly mulched tree: Too much mulch too close to the base of the tree may cause insect and disease problems or excessive soil moisture.