

SOILS, AMENDMENTS, AND MULCHES

SOILS

Soil types in the Pacific Northwest vary hugely in content, quality, and fertility. Because we use native soils and organic amendments in our products, no specific claims of soil fertility or performance can be made.

THREE- WAY SOIL

Three-way soil is composed of sandy soil and composted sawdust and manure. It is recommended for grade changes and for general use. Peat moss, Fertile Mulch, Cedar Grove Compost, or other organic material should be added to the Three-way to make it lighter. Lime and fertilizer should also be added.

PREMIUM PLANTING MIX

This is our premium soil blend. Planting Mix consists of Three-way soil combined with aged bark, sand, Fertile Mulch, and Cedar Grove Compost. It is our best soil for general use. It can be incorporated into ornamental planting beds and lawns, grade changes, and planter boxes. Peat moss or compost can be added when used in planter boxes. Add lime and fertilizer in all applications.

SOIL AMENDMENTS/MULCHES

CEDAR GROVE COMPOST

Cedar Grove Compost is a screened organic material made from composted yard waste from the urban recycling program. No chemicals or sludge by-products are added. It contains nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and a wide range of micronutrients. Use Cedar Grove Compost in pure form or blend into soil to improve soil structure and plant health. Additional fertilizer is recommended with all applications of Cedar Grove Compost. Add five to ten pounds of dolomite lime per cubic yard of Cedar Grove.

For **new lawns**, till soil to a 6" to 8" depth, apply 4" of Cedar Grove Compost, and mix thoroughly with existing soil. As a **top dressing for lawns**, it can be mixed half-and-half with sand and applied ¼" deep.

For **planting ornamental shrubs and flower or vegetable beds**, apply 3" deep and thoroughly mix with existing soil. It can be added without fear of burning tender roots. When planting trees and shrubs, backfill with native soil.

To **conserve moisture and protect the soil from erosion**, add 2" to 4" of Cedar Grove Compost as a mulch. Do not allow any mulch to touch the trunks of existing trees or shrubs.

FERTILE MULCH

Fertile mulch is a screened mixture of composted manure and sawdust. It is recommended for incorporating into the soil for ornamental plantings and is especially good for improving heavy clay soils. It can be used as a mulch for moisture retention and weed control. Additional fertilizer is recommended with all applications of Fertile Mulch.

As a **top dressing for lawns**, it can be mixed half-and-half with sand and applied ¼" deep.

CHICKEN 'N' CHIPS

Chicken 'n' chips is a fertile mulch made up of screened composted chicken manure and wood shavings. It is an excellent mulch for weed control and moisture retention. It can also be used as a soil amendment when planting or to improve heavy soils.

MULCHES

BARK MULCH

Shredded bark mulch can be an effective and attractive form of weed control if used properly. For the most effective suppression of weeds, first eliminate the weeds (particularly invasive ones that re-grow from roots or rhizomes) and lay down a fabric weed barrier. A minimum cover of 2-3 inches of bark should be used. Weed seeds that land in the mulch after it is put down may still germinate but can be easily removed by hand. **DO NOT** pile mulches against the trunks or stems of your plantings; be sure to leave a several-inch ring clear.

Sky carries two grades of shredded bark, medium fine and extra fine; which to use depends only on your personal taste of whether you like the appearance better of the finer or less fine product. Remember that bark mulches will gradually decompose into your soil (improving its texture but temporarily tying up nitrogen) and will need to be renewed periodically.

SUMMIT MULCH

Summit mulch is a thoroughly composted shredded bark. It is the darkest of the bark mulches and provides great weed control.

CEDAR PLAY CHIPS

Cedar play chips are used in areas where you wish to suppress plant growth entirely. The light-colored wood chips are slightly toxic to other plants, so they are not recommended to use around your ornamentals. Their primary use is as absorbent, weed-suppressing mulch for children's play areas or dog runs.

OTHER MULCHES

Other materials can be used as ornamental mulches, although they are not usually applied thickly enough to be effective weed suppressors. By first eliminating the existing weeds and putting down a weed fabric barrier, you can increase their efficacy. Hazelnut shells make a great mulch or foot path plus provide some slug protection and help cool soils. White marble chips make a highly decorative mulch. However, do not use them around acid soil loving plants such as rhododendrons or azaleas. White marble chips can elevate soil pH.