



MULCHING

A good mulch has many advantages and does the following

- Adds valuable nutrients and humus to the soil as it breaks down
- Encourages earthworm activity, which creates channels for the passage of water and roots and improves soil
- Reduces the need for chemical sprays
- Reduces soil erosion and soil compaction around plants keeping the soil temperature uniform
- Keeps soil cooler in summer
- Reduces surface evaporation by 70-80 per cent
- Allows deep and infrequent watering
- Helps retain moisture
- Reduces run off
- Eliminates stress in shallow rooted plants
- Suppresses weeds – any that do germinate are easy to remove
- Can act as a firebreak near houses
- Improves the appearance of the garden area

types of mulch

There are many forms of mulch available. Using recycled mulches such as crushed brick or concrete or organic waste is a sustainable way of creating your garden

Eucalypt mulch	Recycled mulch	Cottage mulch	Hardwood bark chips
Tan bark	Pine chip	Wood chip	Leaf litter
Pea straw	Shredded prunings	Straw	Lucerne hay
Pebbles	River pebble	Washed river sand	Aggregate
Crushed concrete	Crushed brick	Gravel	Seaweed
Old newspapersunder			

application of mulch

Mulch should be between 30mm and 70mm deep, depending on the texture - less for fine texture and more for coarse

If mulch is too thick then moisture is absorbed by the mulch and cannot penetrate to plant roots. It must however be thick enough to help the soil retain the moisture and prevent evaporation.

Keep mulch about 40mm away from stems and trunks of plants to avoid collar rot diseases. Raw materials like wood chips that are watered regularly can draw nitrogen away from plants. Add manure or blood and bone to rectify

