

Reuse your Garden Waste

You can often use your garden rubbish again. This way you save money, time and effort.

Mulching

Use grass mowings and old newspapers as mulch round trees, shrubs and fruit bushes. Lay a thick layer of newspaper on damp soil and cover with freshly cut grass clippings. Add more clippings on top every time you cut the grass. The paper prevents weeds from germinating and the soil stays moist. Weed seeds in the grass clippings may germinate but will then die. Over the year, paper and grass rot down and add nutrients to the soil. This feeds your plants.

Use chopped, green herbaceous prunings as mulch. Pile fresh prunings or stalks on the grass and gently lower a rotary mower on top. The blade acts like a shredder, chops up the prunings and collects the chopped pieces in the grass box. Lay this material on top of newspapers to make a thick mulch.

Plant Supports

Use large or small twiggy branches as plant supports. They are free and look natural.

Choose twigs that are nearly as tall as the final height of the plant you need to prop up. At the beginning of the growing season, stick the branches in the ground round the plant. As the plant grows it will conceal its supports.

Suitable plants for this treatment are delphiniums, cornflowers and scabious.



Use straight poles like ash or hazel to make runner bean or sweet pea frames. Make a focal point in a bed by letting a tall plant climb up a single pole. 2 or 3 of these poles add height and interest to your planting.

Dead Hedge

Some prunings, like prickly rose, gooseberry or bramble stems, are hard to compost. Clematis and ivy are very bulky and can't be shredded easily, but they rot down in a dead hedge. Choose an out of the way part of the garden. Drive 1.5 or 2 metre straight poles into the ground, in a line, 60cm apart. Make a second parallel row 45cm from the first.

Put difficult prunings in this bay. They will gradually rot down and the Dead Hedge makes a good wildlife haven for hedgehogs, wrens, beetles and toads.

Leaves for Leafmould

Leafmould is an excellent soil conditioner. It has many uses.

In the autumn, collect leaves from the lawn and paths. If possible, use a rotary mower for this.

Put the leaves in a thick, plastic bag, adding water if the leaves are dry. Pierce the sides of the bag with a fork to let in rain. Tie up the bag and leave for 18 months.

Or put leaves in a special leafmould bay and leave for 18 months. (For details on this visit www.askorganic.co.uk).

After 18 months the leaves will become like fine, crumbly soil. Use this to:

- Dig into the soil and improve its structure.

- Use as mulch in pots and containers.

- Use when making a potting mix.

For more information contact

ASK Organic www.askorganic.co.uk or 01450 860778

Visit the Home Composting Display within Woodside Plant Centre, Ancrum, Jedburgh.

For information on Waste and Recycling contact Scottish Borders Council 0300 100 1800 or on-line at www.scotborders.gov.uk/recycling

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