

# Soil Building

How I build my soil using organic and sustainable methods?  
This guide will help build healthy soils wood chips.

A healthy soil is key to for a garden that thrives and is resilient to drought and other stress. Many urban soils are degraded and need attention. Once a healthy soil is established, your garden will grow beautiful plants for years to come.

## Why Use Wood Chips?

- Wood chips are an excellent organic mulch that:
- Improve soil structure and moisture retention
- Add slow-releasing nutrients as they decompose
- Suppress weeds naturally
- Foster beneficial fungal networks in soil

## How Do I use Wood Chips?

- **Layer It Right.** Spread 2-4 inches of wood chips over your soil. Keep mulch 2–3 inches away from plant stems or tree trunks.
- **Compost First (Optional):** Partially composted wood chips break down faster and are easier on nitrogen levels.
- **Don't Till.** Let the chips sit on top, mimicking the natural forest floor. Tilling disturbs soil life.

## Where Can I Get Wood Chips?

- Arborist wood chips (often free from local tree services like chip drop!)
- Avoid dyed or treated mulch. Consider using natural, untreated wood.

**Pro Tip** - Leave small open spaces of bare soil for beneficial insects like ground nesting bees.

### Go Natives! Website

<https://gonativesnursery.com/>

[Chalker-Scott, Wood chip mulch: Landscape boon or bane?](#)

[Wood Chip Backyard Biology, Klickitat County](#)

[Wood Chips as a Soil Amendment, City of Seattle](#)