



Soils, Amendments & Mulches

SOILS

Soils in the Pacific Northwest vary 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. **None of Sky's soils have added nutrients, so we recommend using good organic fertilizer with all soil types.** Garden lime is also recommended for lawns, vegetable gardens, and most ornamental plantings except of acid-loving plants (rhododendrons, evergreens, Japanese maples, native plants, and blueberries).

THREE WAY MIX

Three Way Mix is composed of sandy loam, compost and composted manure. It is recommended for grade changes, berms, and for general use. When planting, enrich it by adding additional Fertil-Mulch®, Cedar Grove Compost, or other compost, as well as the appropriate fertilizer.

PLANTING MIX (TOPSOIL)

This is our soil blend for ornamental beds. Planting Mix consists of Three Way combined with Cedar Grove Compost, Fertil-Mulch®, and sand. It is our best soil for general use. It can be incorporated into ornamental planting beds, used for grade changes or to top dress a lawn, and used to fill in general garden beds or berms. Planting Mix is not recommended for filling containers; Sky recommends using commercial potting soil instead.

RAISED BED MIX

Raised Bed Mix is a fifty-fifty mix of Planting Mix and Cedar Grove Compost. It is designed for filling raised garden beds, and is also a good mix to fill very large containers such as veggie bins, whiskey barrels, or Tartar tubs. It is not recommended for use indoors or in smaller containers. It is suitable for growing both ornamentals and edibles.

SOIL AMENDMENTS/MULCHES

CEDAR GROVE COMPOST

Cedar Grove Compost is a screened organic material made from composted green waste and food 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. Inert particles and pieces are commonly found in the green waste stream; some level of inert material may still be present after the product is processed. These materials will not harm your plants, vegetables, or landscape.

Use Cedar Grove Compost to improve soil structure and plant health. Additional fertilizer is recommended with all applications of Cedar Grove Compost. For new lawns, till soil to a 6" to 8" depth, apply lawn fertilizer and dolomite lime at the rate recommended on the packages, cover with 2-4" of Cedar Grove Compost, and till thoroughly into the existing soil. As a top dressing for lawns, mix Cedar Grove Compost half-and-half with sand and apply ¼" deep. For new flower or vegetable beds, apply it 3" deep and thoroughly mix with existing soil.

FERTIL-MULCH®

Fertil-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. As a soil amendment, use similarly to Cedar Grove Compost; additional fertilizer is recommended with all applications of Fertil-Mulch®. As a top dressing for lawns, mix it half-and-half with sand and apply ¼" deep.

Spread 2-3" deep as a mulch, Fertil-Mulch® is good for both moisture retention and weed control in your ornamental beds. It's also good as an overwinter mulch for your vegetable beds if you're not using cover crops; spread 2-3" in the fall to control winter weeds and protect your soil from rain compaction, then in the spring till it in before planting.

MULCHES

BARK/WOOD MULCH

Shredded bark mulch can be an effective and attractive form of weed control. For the most effective suppression of weeds, first eliminate the existing 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 may still germinate but can be easily removed by hand. DO NOT pile mulches against the trunks or stems of your trees and shrubs; leave a several-inch ring clear.

Sky carries shredded mixed fir and hemlock "red" bark in medium fine and extra fine grades. We also carry a "black" mulch called dark mulch. This is a recycled local product, brush and stumps screened to 1" minus and aged to a rich dark color. All are effective in weed control. 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.

CEDAR PLAY CHIPS

Cedar play chips are used in areas where you wish to suppress plant growth, as the light-colored wood chips are slightly toxic to other plants. They are good in pathways, children's play areas, or dog runs. Sky's play chips are natural, untreated cedar. Because play chips are a natural product, each load may vary. Chips range from 1" to 6" in length. Please note that play chips may be sharp. Check out our current sample before purchasing.

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 decorative mulch or foot path, plus they provide some slug protection and help to cool soils. Finally, decorative rock can also be used as a mulch. Sky carries salt-and-pepper lime chips to be used as a mini-mulch around individual hellebores or other acid-hating plants; these chips slowly release calcium into the soil, sweetening it.