



Composting with Leaves



Leaves are chock-full of nutrients! These are examples of the “gold mine” you’ll have with normal growing conditions. Of course, the amounts vary with the kind of tree and its conditions, but the minerals are packed in those leaves.

- boron
- calcium
- chloride
- copper
- iron
- magnesium
- manganese
- nitrogen
- phosphorus
- potassium
- sodium
- zinc



These are perfect for replenishing the soil. It’s a terrible waste to haul them off to the landfill. Take advantage of nature's vast supply of rich nutrients.

So how do you go green in the autumn? Here are the most effective ways to reuse and recycle leaf and leaf-grass mixtures:

1. Mow your leaves Presto! Leaves disappear into tiny bits. Let them be—the leaf bits and the last grass clippings work their way into the soil, slowly and steadily. Without smothering, they happily fertilize your lawn. Keep mowing till leaves drop no more! It’s simple and effective. Your mantra is “Mowing is fertilizing!”.

2. Collect and Mulch Heap your leaves directly onto perennial flower beds and atop the base of your berry bushes. You help them thrive in 2 ways because you both protect and fertilize.

They protect: The blanket of leaves insulates the roots and soil food web from the winter winds and the stress of freeze-thaw cycles. The blanket also holds moisture—you’re making a deposit in the water bank.

They fertilize: You’re feeding your flowers and berries their favorite food. Cheerful beneficial microbes do the work (not you) of converting those decaying leaves into yummy mineral smorgasbords. What a great way to get a jump on next summer.

3. Compost ‘Em Hot Download free instructions for hot composting: www.goodearthgardenschool.com under “Gardener Resources”. Or get the 28min. DVD that shows you the process, step by step. (See same site under “products”).

4. Compost ‘em Cold Simply heap those leaves into a bin or pile. Add layers of kitchen and garden waste, and lawn clippings too. Water it thoroughly as you layer. Now let it all decompose without working at it. This gradual and unhurried method is called “cold composting”. It’s nature’s own way of recycling organic materials back into a rich soil.