

Mulch Depth Guide

The right mulch depth for every application — flower beds, tree rings, paths, playgrounds, and erosion control.

Recommended Depths by Application

Use Case	Depth	Best Mulch	Key Tip
Flower & Shrub Beds	2–3 in	Shredded hardwood	Standard depth for weed suppression
Tree Rings	3–4 in	Hardwood or cedar	Keep 6 in from trunk (donut, not volcano)
Paths & Walkways	3–4 in	Bark chips	Use edging to prevent migration
Playgrounds	6–12 in	Rubber or engineered fiber	Check CPSC for fall-height rules
Erosion Control	4–6 in	Pine bark nuggets	Use heavier material on slopes

Quick Tips

- Never volcano-mulch around trees — flat donut shape, 6-inch gap from trunk
- Wait until soil hits ~55°F before mulching garden beds
- Refresh with 1-inch top-off each spring; remove old mulch if total exceeds 4 inches
- Cedar and cypress break down slower than hardwood — hold depth longer between refreshes