

## Tips for Buying Mulch

Spring is just around the corner and it's almost time to spruce up the yard. Many people prefer the variety that mulch can bring to a landscape. Mulch is available in natural varieties and many colors for every taste. Here are some tips for buying mulch:

1. Figure how much you will need. You can use an online mulch calculator to figure the amount. Most bags of mulch come in 2 cubic foot bags, so there are 13.5 bags to a cubic yard of mulch. Buying in bulk is usually cheaper than buying in bags.
2. Decide what type of mulch you want.

Natural Mulch with No Color: This mulch is usually made from tree bark and comes in several varieties such as pine, hardwood or cypress. It is usually the cheapest mulch in cost, but it will also gray out and will not hold its natural color very long.

Colored Mulch: Colored mulch has increased in popularity due to its ability to enhance the landscape and longer color life than natural mulch. It comes in many colors, but not all mulch is manufactured the same, so you need to know some facts before you buy. Look for colored mulch that is made from 100% virgin raw material. Buying mulch made from virgin raw materials means the mulch is made from clean bark and wood sourced from wood processing mills. Colored mulch in bags from box stores and cheaper bulk mulch is usually made from recycled materials. While that term sounds good, recycled materials can mean that mulch contains ground up pallets, construction waste, metal and unwanted chemicals, i.e. things most people don't want in their yards.

With a little due diligence, you can make sure the mulch you bring home is safe for your children and pets.