

CHOP AND DROP METHOD OF MULCHING AND COMPOSTING

BASICS:

1. Identify a plant that could be mulched.
2. Chop the plant down, (leaving the roots in the soil to decompose/compost) or chop the leaves off the plant.
3. Drop the plant or leaves to the ground.
4. Walk away. (it's that easy!)

What plants do I use?

Almost any plant will do. The goal is for the plant to cover and smother less desirable plants (weeds), but we also want the mulch plant to rot fairly quickly and become part of the soil we are continuing to build. Woody plants will take longer and are best avoided for mulch unless we only use the non-woody parts or chip the wood first. Herbaceous plants will work great.

Are there plants I should NOT use?

Do not use weeds that are invasive such as Bindweed, Chickweed, and Couch Grass as leaving them in the plot may encourage the spread of these species.

Are some plants “better” than others?

Any plant that is considered a *[Dynamic Accumulator](#)* (comfrey, clover, lambs quarter) is a great mulch plant. These plants mine minerals and nutrients from deep in the soil and sub-soil. Mulching them allows these nutrients to become available to the more shallow-rooted plants. *[Nitrogen Fixing Plants](#)* (beans and peas) are also great for Chop and Drop Mulching. As these plants rot, they will provide extra nitrogen to the surrounding plants. However, all plants will eventually rot and become soil.

When should I Chop and Drop?

If the plant is one we are trying to minimize in our landscape, then we will want to chop and drop just as the plants begin to flower, but before they set seed. We will allow that plant to put all its energy into building the flower structures, and then we chop it to the ground. If it is a non-desirable plant, we can Chop and Drop Mulch whenever (before!) the plant is about to set seeds.

Adapted from and with thanks to TCPermaculture.com

[:http://tcpermaculture.com/site/2013/11/15/permaculture-projects-chop-and-drop-mulching/](http://tcpermaculture.com/site/2013/11/15/permaculture-projects-chop-and-drop-mulching/)

And here is a great you tube video: Chop and Drop your Way to a Better Garden – You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p9GsNRc0jQ> However, just a note: Mint is not allowed in COCGardens due to its' invasive nature.