

Fall Leaves, Nature's Bounty

Autumn is finally here! This for pumpkin flavoring, delightfully cool weather, and that exquisite fall foliage. Until, of course, the foliage does what it promises it's going to do and falls all over your lawn and starts turning soggy and brown. Before you get disgruntled about the amount of yardwork you have to do now, here are some tips on how to put those amazing fall leaves to work for you and the yard you work so hard to maintain throughout the year.

Compost

If you love to garden, then you're in luck, leaves are a naturally compostable material and an excellent source of what is known as brown compost. To make successful, homemade compost you need equal parts green and brown compost materials, and the green, which is mostly made up of vegetable scraps and grass clippings, is much easier to come by throughout the year. Often, gardeners resort to old newspapers to make up the deficiencies in their brown compost, until fall comes rolling to the rescue of course. You can toss all of your leaves onto the pile at once, or save a few bags for the spring when the brown compost is almost all coffee grounds. Either way, your compost will become richer, more effective, and your newly planted seeds will be very grateful.

Leaf Mold

The long-term garden planner can take their leaves and store them somewhere out of the way and make a staple of English garden soil, leaf mold. All it takes is a few garbage bags or plastic bins, and a moist place to store them in. As long as the leaves stay wet, fungi will take over, and in about two years, instead of leaves, there's a mineral-rich fertilizer in their place that will make the soil in your gardens the perfect place for your plants.

Garden Insulation

Leaves also make excellent insulation material for a number of outdoor projects. Any plants that need protection throughout the winter will benefit from a natural layer of leaves that separate them from chicken wire, blankets, or any other insulation material you choose to use. Throughout the winter, the leaves will break down and give the plants some added nutrients, so it's a win-win situation. And if anyone is looking to experiment with worm bins, leaves can also insulate those.

Mulch

If you have no interest in gardening or raking your leaves, then just mow your lawn, and the leaves will take care of both you and themselves. Leaves are so full of natural nutrients that if you mulch them up with your lawn mower and leave them there, they will feed your lawn over the winter, and come spring time, you will have beautiful, fluffy, green grass. You may want to wait till November to mulch those leaves up though, as a leaf-strewn yard adds a nice creep factor to your decorations on Halloween night.

At the beginning of the season autumn leaves give us beauty, and near the end of the season, they provide our lawns and gardens with the nutrients they need to grow again in the spring. The best part is that they don't cost anyone a thing for either of those things. If you would like more information on how to turn your leaves into useful garden material, or for help with any of your home projects, call Liberty Builders. We're always happy to help.

Sources

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