

Making the perfect leafmould

Step 1 Collect the leaves



Small quantities of leaves are best gathered by hand using a rake; however, if you have a large quantity of leaves, they can be collected with a special leaf blower vacuum, which shreds the material into smaller pieces helping to speed up the decaying process.

Step 4 Use chicken wire



Alternatively, you can make a simple container made from plastic or wire netting with a few supporting stakes which can be reused year after year. Adjust the size to suit your requirements.

Step 7 Soil improver



You can also dig young leafmould into beds as a soil improver for sowing and planting.

Step 2 Add moisture



If the leaves are dry, moisten them with a little water.

Step 5 A little patience



Leave the bag or container untouched for between one and two years. The longer you leave it, the finer the leafmould will be.

Step 8 Sowing mix



Well rotted leafmould that is two years old or more can be used to make a seed sowing mix. Combine equal parts leafmould, sharp sand and garden compost for an ideal growing medium.

Step 3 Bag it up



Bag up the leaves in a large bin bag and punch holes in it to allow the air to circulate. Place in a secluded area of the garden.

Step 6 Mulch



'Young' leafmould, which is one to two years old, can be used as mulch around shrubs, herbaceous borders, trees and vegetables – just add it as a layer on top of existing soil.

Step 9 Potting



For established plants, mix well rotted leafmould that is over two years old with equal parts sharp sand, garden soil and compost to make a perfect potting compost.

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