

Garden Barriers

Material: Black Plastic or Solar Mulch

How Used

Black plastic mulch is typically used to suppress weeds or to heat soil for planting warm-loving crops earlier. It is usually used in conjunction with irrigation drip line played under the plastic. Black plastic increases soil temperatures about 5°F at a depth of 2 inches compared to bare ground. Black plastic can be used for a number of crops in the home garden including both warm and cool season vegetables, strawberries and cut flowers.

To Install

- Prepare soil well: It should be smooth, weed free, loose, and moist. *Do not lay plastic on dry soil.*
- If using drip tape, be sure it is laid well and it must go underneath the plastic.
- Plastic should be in close contact with the soil for maximum heat transfer into the soil.
- Be sure the plastic is stretched taut laying flat on the soil surface and that the edges of the plastic are well secured with soil.
- Be careful not to puncture the plastic, as any holes allow sunlight to permeate and will encourage weed growth.



Black plastic used with drip irrigation line for tomatoes.

Material: Insect Netting or Barrier

How Used

Insect netting is a thin fabric, similar to row cover yet thinner and more porous. It is not suitable for frost protection. Use insect netting on crops with great pest or bird pressure where there is no need to insulate the crop. It transmits up to 85 percent of available sunlight and will not block rain or overhead irrigation. It will keep most insect pests away from your crops as long as plants are completely covered and the edges are securely pinned to the ground. Netting can block aphids, potato beetles, Japanese beetles, grasshoppers, leaf miners, cabbage worms, root maggots, and some vine borers.

How to Install

- Prepare the bed as normal.
- Lay the cover directly on the ground, make sure to provide enough slack in the cover for the crop to grow and do not pull the cover taut.
- Make sure to seal the edges of the row cover with sandbags, soil or with row cover pins.
- Remove the cover for pollination, weeding, harvest, or when the crop is finished.
- Be careful not to punch holes or create any tears in the netting during installation.

Material: Row Cover or Remay Cloth

How Used

Row cover is a polypropylene garden cover that transmits 70% of available light. It keeps heat in, bugs out, and is an excellent wind and sun break for young transplants. It allows rain and overhead irrigation to reach plants and soil. Row cover will protect plants from frost damage down to 28 degrees F.

How to Install

- Prepare the bed as normal.
- Hoops can be used to create a tunnel of row cover, which is especially useful for crops that grow taller like tomatoes and peppers, or the row cover can lay directly on the crop, for plants like radishes, bok choy, and salad mix. If laying the cover directly on the ground, make sure to provide enough slack in the cover for the crop to grow and do not pull the cover taut.
- Make sure to seal the edges of the row cover with sandbags, soil or with row cover pins.
- Remove the cover for pollination, weeding, harvest, or when the crop is finished.
- Be careful not to punch holes or create any tears in the row cover during installation.



Row covers offer protection from frost, sun, wind, and insects.