



How to Dispose of Fall Leaves

You found the rake—now do the right thing

Original Article By Mary Kate Hogan -This Old House

Life was easy when you could pile up leaves and let kids romp in them until the pile was no longer your Problem or enjoy the aroma of a traditional Halloween bonfire. Today there are rules, not to mention neighbors who wish you'd keep your leaves on your side of the street. Read on for 3 ways to get rid of leaves.

WHEN IN DOUBT, MULCH

“The most environmentally conscious thing to do is to leave the leaves on your lawn,” says Kurt Morrell of the New York Botanical Garden. Leaves, when left to decay in the street, will release phosphorous, which can find its way into storm drains and waterways—better to shred them finely with a mulching mower and let them fertilize the lawn. Or rake choppings under shrubs and onto flower and vegetable beds as mulch.

OR COMPOST THEM

Decaying leaves also generate carbon, which helps spin food scraps into “black gold” — good for the gardener and for the garbage collector. In a mixed pile, keep the ratio of dead leaves to grass clippings at about 2-to-1. Spread the leaves on top so they can soak up the moisture in food scraps and help keep a lid on odors; turn over regularly to discourage pests. Or just compost the leaves alone in a pile to make leaf mold.

CURBSIDE COLLECTION?

Many towns pick up leaf piles at the curb to compost them. Curbside pickup of the yard waste here in Fall River takes place on your regular trash day beginning in April, and ending in December. Here are our local guidelines:

- Brush must be bundled and tied.
- Bundled material must not exceed 3 feet in length and 2 feet in diameter
- Branches are not to exceed 2.5 inches in diameter.
- Yard waste must be in barrels not to exceed 35 gallons or 50 pounds, boxes, or paper leaf bags.
- Limit of 15 bags/boxes/barrels.
- No plastic bags of any type can be used.