

Landscape Fabric & Mulch Fabric Explained- What Thickness Do I Need? How Do I Lay It?

Weeds and nuisance plants can be a real problem for both a domestic gardener and someone who grows crops in larger quantities. There is a baffling range of different products available to you to help prevent and combat the problem. Our aim is to provide guides to help you better understand the difference between the products. In this case, we're going to look at [landscape fabric](#) (also known as [mulch fabric](#)), and where it fits in the wider spectrum of weed control membranes.

Landscape membrane is generally a spun bonded textile, which aims to starve weeds of sunlight, preventing their photosynthesis and thus preventing their growth. This type of geotextile normally has a weight of around 50gsm. This is essentially a measure of its durability. It is much lighter than the 100gsm woven style and is more suited to paths and driveways. Ideal applications of the lighter mulch fabric are weed prevention for flowerbeds, borders, and other low traffic areas.

In terms of the construction of landscaping membrane, it's usually made of polypropylene. This hard wearing material takes an incredibly long time to break down naturally and when used correctly should prevent weed growth for many years. Created from small fibres, it is strong and when covered, long lasting.

Before laying, care must be taken to remove any pre-existing vegetation which could prevent efficient placement. Existing weeds could tear the fabric, so clear the area well in advance using a combination of weed killers and manual techniques. Ensure that the full area is covered with the landscape and overlap of around 10 inches between sheets. This will prevent any unwanted plants from finding their way through any gaps. It's well worth pegging it down before any bark or stones are placed on top. Make sure you use an appropriate fixing peg based on the type of soil you have. A good heavy duty plastic peg should be suitable for most soil types, but you may consider using a stronger metal staple peg for harder ground.

In order to grow plants in the covered area, cut a small cross in the desired position before planting. When all planting is completed, this lighter landscape membrane must be covered with some type of mulch (the heavier woven style weed control does not need to be covered). This could be artificial or natural, such as bark, stones, gravel, etc... to help improve the membrane's weed prevention capabilities.

In order to further extend the lifespan once installed, make sure you purchase one that's been UV stabilised to prevent sun damage, and buy from a reputable supplier so you know you're getting a quality product.