

Weed Fabric- What to Buy and How To Use It

[Weed control fabric](#), is a geotextile constructed of woven polyethylene fibres designed to prevent growth and the spread of weeds whilst maintaining soil conditions. You will see the 'gsm' number along with each membrane product. GSM refers to its weight in grams per square metre, and this acts essentially as a measure of its durability. 100gsm (heavy duty) & 125gsm (extra heavy duty) are far more durable geotextiles than the alternative 50gsm landscape fabric, making this type of membrane ideal for footpaths, driveways, and other high traffic areas. It's 'ripple weave' construction allows for minimal light penetration, preventing weeds from germinating, whilst still allowing water and nutrients to pass through maintaining soil fertility.

To use this type of geotextile to its full potential, it is recommended to remove as many weeds from the area as possible. This will allow the fabric to lie flat, avoiding the need for adjustments at a later date. Removal of weeds can be done either manually or with the aid of a strong weed killer. The weed control sheets should be pegged securely into the soil using an appropriate anchor peg, approximately one peg per square metre should be adequate. Ensure that each sheet overlaps each other slightly to avoid weed growth in any gaps; an overlap of around 10 inches should be enough. The next step depends on where you are positioning the weed control membrane.

If you're using the fabric as a base layer for a flowerbed or border, you should cut a small cross in the area in which you want to plant. To improve your flowerbeds aesthetics, you may wish to cover with a layer of mulch. This could be natural or artificial, the choice is yours. When selecting a material to use as mulch, ensure that it's one that will continue to allow effective drainage.

For driveways, the weed control membrane is normally laid under the base layer of hard core to prevent any underlying root systems from damaging the top surface. Ideally use the widest width of weed control fabric to suit your driveway to lessen the number of sheet joins/overlaps required. This type of fabric is normally available from 1m to 5m widths. Reputable suppliers will typically provide the sheets in 10m lengths, so you only need to buy multiples of that to match your requirements rather than buy a much larger roll and have too much. However, if required, larger rolls are normally available in 50m or 100m lengths.

When choosing a product to purchase, check the product is UV treated. This means that the product will not deteriorate as quickly in the sun's powerful rays. When choosing fixing pegs, if required, make sure you choose pegs that are appropriate for the soil conditions. A plastic anchor peg should be appropriate for soft to medium soil, but for harder or stony ground choose a metal fixing peg.

Colours can vary. Usually you will find it in black or green with lines (creating squares) running through it to help you measure and cut the membrane more accurately. Always work with square metres; it is an easy way of calculating the area to be covered and matching the corresponding fabric.