



PROCESSING LEAVES ON YOUR PROPERTY

MOW LEAVES

- Use your lawn mower, and mow over the leaves in your yard (where possible).
- Mow once you have a thin layer of leaves over your lawn. This will mean mowing multiple times as the leaves fall, possibly weekly during the season.
- Chop leaves into ½" pieces (dime-sized). You may need to make more than one pass over the leaves to get the pieces small enough.

MOWER SETTINGS

- No special lawn mowers supplies are necessary.
- Set the mower height on the highest setting.
- For a lawn mower with a side outlet, you should cover the side outlet so the chopped leaves are directed back down to the yard, instead of to the side.
- You can use a special mulching blade, however it is not necessary.

COMPOSTING LEAVES



Chop up leaves before adding to your compost bin. This will take up less space and facilitate decomposition, allowing you to compost many more leaves than if they are left whole.



Use an existing compost bin or create a new pile for chopped leaves only. Turn this occasionally, and by spring you should be able to use the compost to augment your soil for spring planting.



THERE ARE MULTIPLE
WAYS TO CHOP
LEAVES INTO MULCH
FOR USE IN AREAS
OTHER THAN YOUR
LAWN.



Options for collecting and distributing leaves on your lawn.

String trimmer in a trash can method:

Place your string trimmer into the bottom of an empty trash can. Fill the can with leaves. Use the string trimmer as you would an immersion blender to chop up the leaves.

Mower with bag method:

Rather than mulching leaves into your lawn, attach the catchment bag to your mower and collect leaf mulch in the bag.

Chop leaves on the driveway method:

Rake the leaves to your driveway, mow over them to chop them up, then rake or sweep them up.

Leaf blower/vacuum mulcher method:

Fit your leaf blower with the vacuum attachment and bag. Vacuum the leaves to shred them into mulch, and collect mulch in the bag.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A message from Bloomington Utilities (video)

Mow, yes mow your leaves (video)

Wait, Is It Actually a Mistake to Rake Leaves? (article)

Autumn Leaves Trash to Treasure (article)

Everything You Know About Composting is Wrong (video)

NPR Life Kit: How to Start Composting (article + audio)

More info:
[bloomington.in.gov/
innovate/2020-leaves](https://bloomington.in.gov/innovate/2020-leaves)