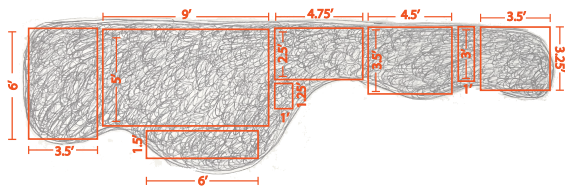


## ESTIMATING MULCH

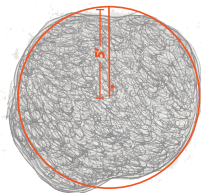
If you've never bought mulch in bulk before, it can be tricky to know how much you need. In a world where every flower bed is a square, it would just be a matter of length  $\times$  width, as we know from school. However, most flower beds and mulched areas tend to be oddly shaped which complicates things.

If you have an oddly shaped flower bed, the easiest method is simply to mentally break it down into a series of squares or rectangles, which you can then measure. It won't be perfect, but fortunately the world of mulch is not an exact science requiring Swiss-engineered precision. Here's an example:



In this example, you can see that there are 8 shapes that approximate the shape of the flower bed. If we multiply the length and width of each shape, then add them together, we arrive at a total of 118.25 square feet for this bed. There are some small areas not covered by the shapes, but we can add a little bit to the total area to make up for that.

$6 \times 3.5 = 21$	21
$5 \times 9 = 45$	45
$1.5 \times 6 = 9$	9
$1.25 \times 1 = 1.25$	1.25
$2.5 \times 4.75 = 11.875$	11.875
$3.5 \times 4.5 = 15.75$	15.75
$3 \times 1 = 3$	3
$3.25 \times 3.5 = 11.375$	+ 11.375
	<b>118.25</b>



$5 \times 5 = 25$
$25 \times 3 = 75$

If you have any circular areas, measure from the center to the edge, in feet. Multiply that number by itself, and then again multiply that total by 3. Remember that if there's a tree or bush in the middle of the circular area you won't need to put mulch there.

If we repeat this process for every area that we want to mulch, we can get a rough idea of the total square footage.

Suppose that we arrived at a total area of 2,324 square feet from all our mulched areas. Now, we multiply that by the desired depth, in inches. The depth can vary depending on how much mulch is already in the bed, but we recommend between 2 and 3 inches as a rule of thumb.

$$2,324 \times 3 = 6,972$$

Finally, we divide that number by 324 (since one cubic yard of mulch covers 324 square feet to a depth of one inch, trust us on that).

$$6,972 \div 324 = 21.52$$

Since you'll probably get a number like "12.458382", just round that up or down to the next whole number. That's the number of cubic yards of mulch you need!

After applying mulch to a property for the first time, you'll probably realize that you want it a little bit thicker, thinner, or that for some other reason you need to tweak the amount of mulch you buy. That's to be expected.



Be careful when mulching around trees! The mulch shouldn't touch the trunk of the tree, and shouldn't be mounded against the trunk. This can cause health problems for the tree.

