

SOIL TYPES

SOIL

Soils are named according to the proportion of sand, silt, and clay that they contain. Soils with even mixtures are called loams. The actual soil type can be obtained by looking at its texture and composition then checking it with the soil triangle.

WHY SAMPLE SOIL?

This helps us determine the soil type, once we know this it will help us understand the soils characteristics (both good and bad), what plants we can grow in this soil type, or how we can improve and cultivate the soil.

TOOLS FOR THE TASK

A large jar
Trowel
Water
Ruler



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COLLECTING YOUR SOIL SAMPLE (SEE WEBSITE VIDEO PAGE)

1. Choose the area from which you want to determine the soil type.
2. With your trowel, dig down 15-20cm (to give you a true representation of the soil in plant root zones).
3. Hand remove any large debris (leaves, grass roots, sticks) and stones and add to the jar, filling about a third of the jar with the sample.
4. Fill up the jar with twice its quantity of water (1/3 soil : 2/3 water).
5. Replace lid and shake well for five minutes and set the jar aside to stand.
6. In due course distinct layers will appear (clay can take up to 48 hours to clear).
7. These layers are the different sizes of particles, largest at the bottom, sand, followed by silt and clay at the top.
8. Measure the total height of the soil sample, then measure the thickness of each band to find the proportions of sand, silt and clay.

EXTENSION

Take each layer measurement and divide it by the total height then multiply it by 100 to give you your %.