

Soil Investigations

Materials:

- 1 quart sized jar with lid - per sample
- Measuring cups
- Tape
- Soil
- Water

Instructions:

1. Find a spot with soil and dig down about 8 inches.
2. Collect $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of soil that is free of rocks. Add to jar.
3. Add $3 \frac{1}{2}$ cups of water to the soil
4. Using tape, write a label for where you got the soil (example: backyard garden)
5. Seal on lid tightly and shake for 5 minutes
6. Leave undisturbed for 24-48 hours

Investigation:

After 24-48 hours look at your jar. Do you see layers? Those are made of different sized particles. The bottom layer is the largest particle size so it settles first. This is **sand**. Do you see the second layer from the bottom? This layer is **silt**. It is a smaller particle so it settles next. The top layer is **clay**. This is the smallest particle and takes the longest to settle. There might be some that hasn't settled and is still in the water! On the picture of the jar, color and label your layers of soil.

You can improve soil for gardening. Do you have a lot of clay? Clay holds a lot of water, add compost, bark, or leaves! Does it have a lot of sand? Sand doesn't hold water, add compost or grass clippings to help!

Watch the Soil Investigations video on our website to see how to do this experiment!

