

Soil Shake Up

You can do a simple shake test to find out how much clay, silt, and sand is in your soil. All you need is a **jar with a lid**, a handful of **soil**, and **water**.

Soil shake-up activity

Dig down about six inches and grab a handful of soil.

Put the soil into a jar. Fill it to the top with water and close the lid tightly. Shake the jar for a few minutes.

Set the jar down. Look for large particles of sand, which should settle at the bottom of the jar. Mark the top of this layer with a pen or tape.

Wait an hour. Look for a layer of smaller silt particles, which should settle above the sand. Mark the top of this layer.

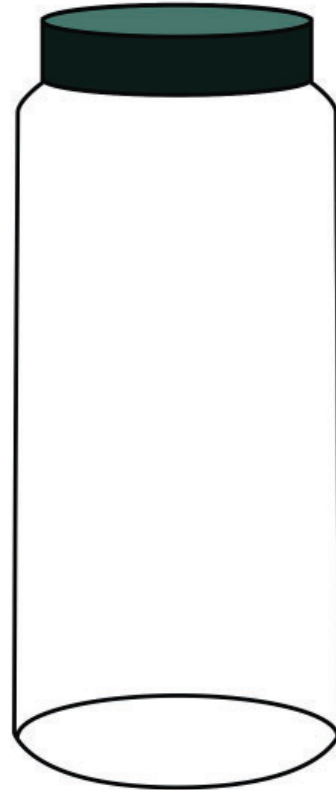
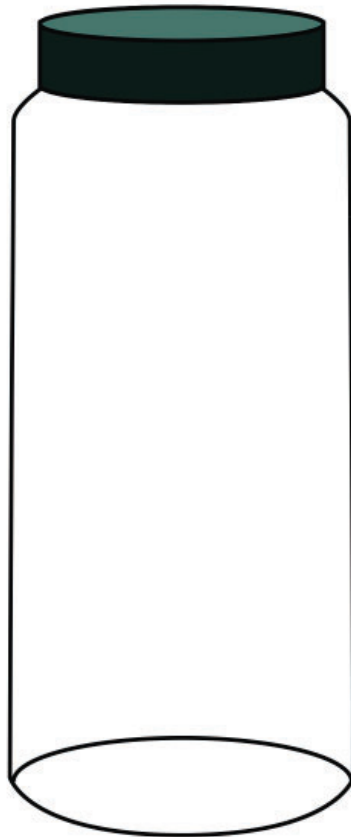
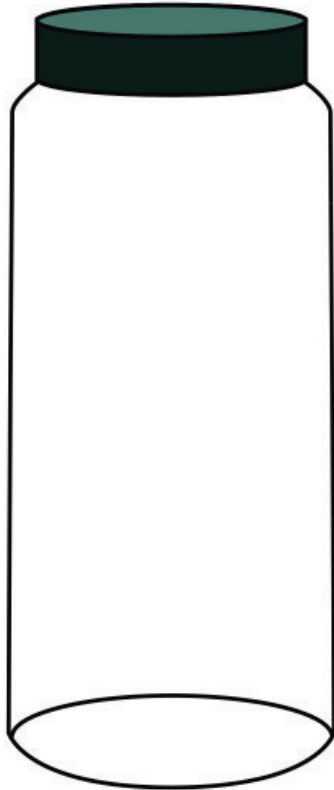
Wait a day and look at the jar again. The water should be clear. Look for a layer of the smallest clay particles to settle on top of the silt. Mark the top of this layer.

The size of the layers tells you how much sand, silt, or clay is in your soil.



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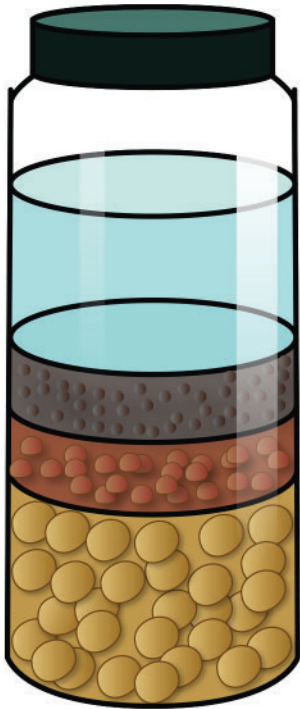
Here are some empty jars to draw your own soil layers.

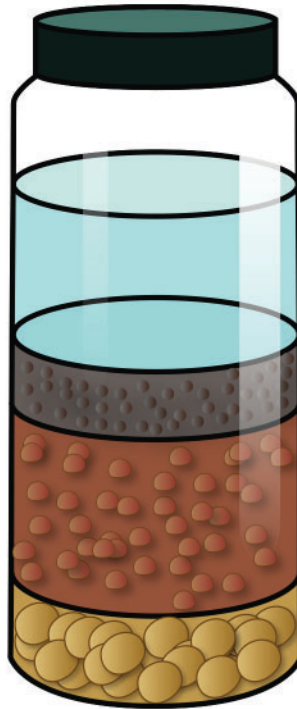


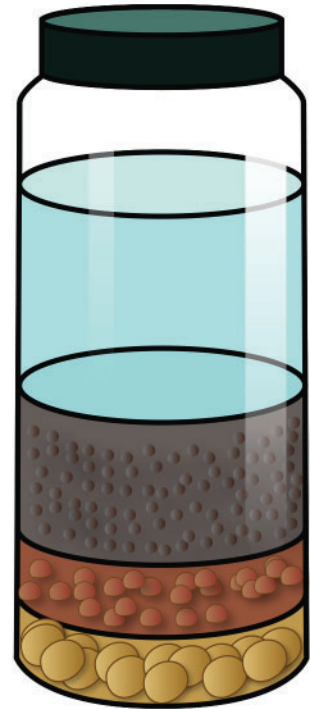
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Look at the three sample results below. For each jar, record whether the soil contains mostly **clay**, **silt**, or **sand**.







Loam

The best soil for growing is loam. It has equal parts clay, silt, and sand. Draw what the results of the shake test will look like if your soil is loamy.

