

Finding your Soil Type

To determine an optimum programme for your lawn we need to establish soil type. This is because different soils hold and release water, air and nutrients differently. This is going to have some effect on the demands of the grass and on the assimilation of nutrients.



Have you got clay or sandy soil?

You can often tell just by looking at your soil:

- If it's light coloured possible with a hint of yellow, orange or red then it's very likely you have a sandy soil. A few clay soils are also this colour so be careful.
- If it's dark brown or grey to black it is a rich soil (often called loam) or clay based soil.

If you can't tell then take a small sample of soil from your garden. If you think the soil in your lawn is different from the rest of the garden then use a spade to lift a small area of lawn turf and take a golf ball size bit of soil from about 2" down.

The soil needs to have some moisture in it for these tests so do these tests after some rain.

Test 1:

Squeeze the soil in the palm of your hand; if it forms a sausage shape and stays together when you open your hand its clay based soil. If it crumbles into just a few pieces then a sandy base is more likely.

Test 2:

Take a pea sized bit of soil and smear it between your fingers. If it feels smooth and silky it has a clay base. If it feels finely 'gritty' then it has a sand base.

Hopefully the results from your two tests give the same answer!

You can take this a step further by getting a soil analysis done. If you are going the whole hog and intend investing a lot of time and money in your lawn then a test every 3 years would be a good investment.