

# Instructions for the Soil Texture and Soil NPK & pH Tests

1. Two types of tests—**Soil Texture and Soil pH & NPK** (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (potash))—will be done at the class so **two clear** jars of soil will be needed.
2. Follow the instructions in the [Oregon State University Extension Bulletin EC628](#) for how to collect a soil sample. Do this as soon as possible. Molehills are a great place to find “premixed” soil.
  - Bring the soil inside and spread it out on newspapers or plastic to let it air dry then remove any roots, rocks, etc.
  - Do not dry out soil inside an oven or next to a stove! This could change the characteristics of the soil and alter the reading.
3. Carefully follow the directions for the [Soil Texture](#) assignment.
  - Soil layers will be established as it settles. You will determine the soil texture this way.
  - Adding a tablespoon of dry dishwashing detergent will serve as a surfactant, allowing soil to separate easier.
  - There is extra at the Extension office if you need some.
4. Bring the jar to class with you. Avoid jostling it as much as possible so the mixture does not get disturbed and cloudy.
  - This could prolong the results of the Soil Texture test.
5. The Soil pH & NPK test will require your **dry** soil in the second jar.
  - One cup of soil will be mixed with five cups of DISTILLED water at the class.
    - Distilled water is generally pH balanced (neutral) and will not alter your soil pH test.
  - You will test the clear portion of this mixture at class with your free Rapitest Soil Test Kit.
6. Bring a box or other container for the soil while testing it in class. Be prepared to get your hands dirty and have some fun!

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