

HOW TO TAKE A SOIL SAMPLE

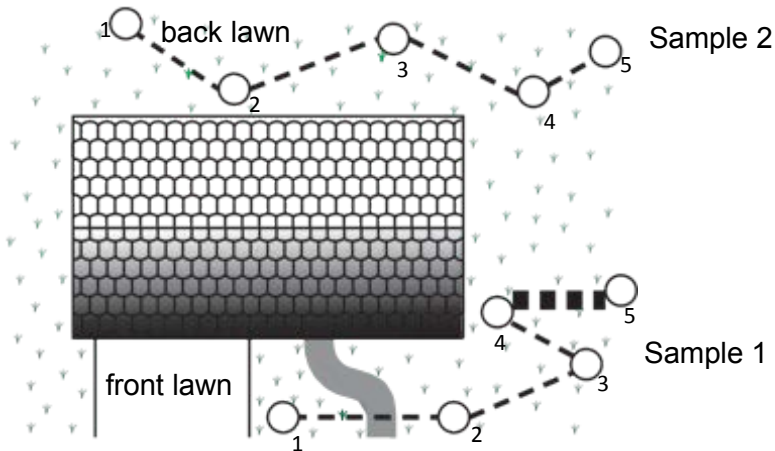
The quality of your results depends largely on the quality of your sample. For best results, please follow these instructions.

WHEN

Soil samples may be collected and submitted any time throughout the year.

WHERE

- Areas that are similar in appearance, topography, and use.
- Sample a garden separately from a lawn. Or a hilly area separately from a flat area. For example, you may want to sample the front lawn and the back lawn separately (see diagram).
- Sample areas of concern separately (trouble spots, near buildings, under trees, etc.).



HOW

- Use a garden trowel, shovel, spade, auger, etc.
- Scrape away surface litter, grass, or leaves.
- Collect 4-6 samples based on these depths:
 - existing grass - 0-3"
 - new grass - 0-6"
 - gardens - 0-6"
 - trees & shrubs - 0-12"
- Place the samples from that area into a clean bucket or pan.
- Mix together and place into a plastic baggie or used food container, etc., and submit as a composite sample (2-3 cups).
- Label the container with a sample name.

TESTS

- **Regular Test:** includes pH, percent organic matter, phosphorus, potassium, pH (lime if needed), and estimated texture
- **Soluble Salts:** request if
 - "black dirt" has been used and poor growth is observed,
 - there is possible damage from salt from roads/sidewalks, or excessive fertilizer.
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- **Lead Test:** Select only if lead contamination is suspected. Sample only the surface 3/4" for play areas, and surface to 3-4" for gardens. **Send a separate sample if you are also requesting a Regular Test.**

HOW TO SUBMIT SAMPLES

Place samples in a mailer/box. Include the request form and payment (do not put them inside touching the soil because the paperwork gets soggy). Please use a separate sheet for each sample, though you may send one check for multiple samples. Make checks payable to the University of Minnesota. **Do not send cash**

Mail or deliver the samples to:

Soil Testing and Research Analytical Laboratory

University of Minnesota
135 Crops Research Building
1902 Dudley Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Mon-Fri 8:00am - 4:30pm
soiltest@umn.edu
(612) 625-3101
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