
Soil Amendments 101

- Composted manure and mushroom compost make great amendments for enriching your garden soil.
- Do a sniff test. Let your nose tell you if the contents smell like soil — fresh and free of garden chemicals or contaminants.
- Read the fine print. If the bag of soil says “use for filling holes,” do *not* buy for planting beds. Such soil usually doesn't support plant life.
- Don't amend the soil in your planting holes for trees unless your soil is extremely dense and compacted.
- When planting roses, plan on mixing the existing soil half and half with composted manure and mushroom compost.
- For raised beds, mix potting soil with a variety of organic materials, including compost, leaves and straw.
- One cubic foot of potting mix equals roughly 30 quarts, and it will fill 18 six-inch pots, three 10-inch pots and one 14-inch pot.
- Compost — made at home — is the best soil amendment you can apply.