

# What type of soil do you have?

## WHAT ARE SOILS MADE OF?

Soil is made up of a mixture of mineral (sand, silt, clay) and rot ed plant (organic) material. Dif erent soil types contain dif erent amounts of each.

Soils with a large amount of sand part cles form lightweight, free-draining soils, and don't hold on to water or nutrients.

Soils with lots of clay part cles form which hold onto water well and can become waterlogged and heavy when wet.

Soils with lots of silt part cles form which hold water.

in soils gradually accumulates from dead plant material and soil microbes. This releases nutrients which help the plants grow and also improves the structure and ability of the soil to hold water.

## WHAT ELSE IS IN THE SOIL?

Soils also contain water and air. Just under half (about 30-40%) of soil is made up of water and air! Well structured soil contains more air-filled pores. Soils also contain animals, such as insects, bacteria and earthworms, and lots of fungi. These help to break down dead materials in the soil.

