



How to Prepare the Soil for a Vegetable Garden


Preparing a plot for growing vegetables means creating an environment for successful planting. The process is specific and takes time, but it is necessary for a thriving garden. If you are interested in learning the steps to prepare the soil for a vegetable garden, consider the following suggestions.

Steps

- 1 Understand that it takes a couple of years to prepare your soil for optimal gardening.** You don't have to wait 2 years to plant your garden, however. There are steps that you can take that will allow you to grow a good garden presently.
- 2 Begin soil preparation by digging out the area of your vegetable garden.** Create the perimeter first by digging the edge of the garden area before breaking the ground in-between. Remove the top layer of sod with a shovel. If the area is not a grassy spot, then just remove weeds, rocks and debris.
- 3 Analyze the soil to determine its condition.** Too much sand in the soil may make the soil dry, and too much clay may make it too wet. In order to grow a successful garden, your soil should be a good combination of earth, sand and clay. You can send a sample to your local garden center and get it analyzed.
- 4 Cultivate the soil by turning it with a shovel or rototiller.** Tilling the soil breaks it up and prepares it for planting. Till the soil 12-inches (30 cm) down. Using a rototiller will make this process faster than if you do it by hand. Continue to remove rocks and debris as you work.
- 5 Mix some fertilizer into the soil to prepare it for growing vegetables successfully.** Opt for compost, humus or manure. Space the bags out on top of the plowed ground. Break open the bags and pour the compost onto the ground. Spread the fertilizer around the area with a rake. Work the compost into the tilled ground by piercing the cultivated soil at least 6 inches (15 cm) down with a shovel and turning the soil to break it up.
- 6 Add topsoil to the surface of your garden area.** This process should be similar to adding compost to your garden area. Good topsoil will allow you to grow your garden in the present as your current soil prepares itself for future planting.
- 7 Allow the cultivated soil to sit for a couple of days before planting.** You can turn the soil daily if you wish, but the process is not necessary if you turned the soil adequately already.
- 8 Ideally you should prepare vegetable garden soil with compost 2 seasons ahead of the time you plant your vegetables.** This time is needed for the compost to break down and greatly improve your soil.

Community Q&A

How do I use compost?

 Use it as you would any other fertilizer.
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Sources and Citations

- <http://www.gardenguides.com/68298-prepare-soil-vegetable-garden.html>

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