

# Healthy Soil

What you plant your plant in can also make a big difference in how it grows. And there are many different options for potting your plants and filling your pots with soil.

## Key Terms

Soil has a lot of different components to it, and some plants do prefer certain soil compositions over others, but let's start with the basics types of potting material:

- **Potting soil:** Not actually soil! Potting soil or potting mix is a mix of peat moss or coconut coir, and ingredients such as sand, perlite, vermiculite, and grit. It is lighter than traditional soil and allows for extra water to drain better.
- **Compost:** a material made by decomposing organic materials such as food waste or fall leaves, compost is rich in nutrients and beneficial organisms. You can add it to soil or potting mix to increase its nutrients.
- **Fertilizer:** any substance added to soil to increase its nutrients and support plant growth. Can be compost, egg shells, coffee grounds, or synthetic mixes bought in stores.



## Where do I get soil?

If you buy a plant, it usually already comes in its own soil. You can also buy potting soil that is designed for indoor plants with the right mix of textures, materials, and nutrients for most indoor plants.

There are lots of different ways to get soil if you want to save money. You may have a pot or planter that is already full of soil for you to put your plant in. If you have an outdoor garden that you know has good soil, you could borrow a bit from there. If you're not sure about the quality of the soil you already have, you can use a smaller amount of new indoor potting soil by mixing it in with the soil you already have to make sure your plants have some fresh soil to grow in. You can also maintain the health of your soil by adding compost or fertilizer - but how much fertilizer and how often depends on the plant.