

## Soil and compost

### Type

It's important to be aware of the type of soil you have in your garden. If it is very sandy or heavy clay, then only certain plants are likely to really thrive. However, all soil types benefit from the addition of lots of organic material. When creating a new garden, commercially available soils and composts will greatly increase the success of your plants.

### Acidity

Soil acidity also plays a part, again, because some plants are particular about the acidity of the soil they grow in. Acidity can be adjusted to suit the plants that are being used, or to better suit the ones that are there. The common measure for acidity or alkalinity of soil is PH and this can be tested to determine the level your soil is at and what changes are necessary.

### Drainage

Almost all plants detest sitting in waterlogged soil. It can cause disease and rotting of the root zone. By ensuring a free draining soil structure, the plant can access the water it needs without being submerged in it.

### Hydrophobic

Soil that repels water when watered is just the result of an exhausting or absence of organic matter. Mixing organic material such as compost or adding wetting agents will rectify this easily.

### Compost

Commercially available composts are good, but the best source is your own. Compost made from a variety of materials such as leaves, lawn clippings, food scraps and mulched prunings. Improving your soil with compost, will increase the range of plants that will do well in your garden. Compost also attracts earthworms which are among the best for creating a good soil structure.