

How to take a soil sample

When taking soil samples there are a few important factors to consider that will affect your results.

Do take samples from a large area and combine them

This will give you a more representative result of the area you are testing. Ideally take a sample from 2-4 points randomly chosen from across the entire lawn. Mix the samples thoroughly.

Do provide a larger sample if possible

Samples must be at least 150g, any less than this will make accurate analysis of nutrients difficult for the laboratory. You may be required to send another sample if your original sample is too small.

Do not take your samples from the top 1 ½ inches of the soil profile

The top two inches of soil may contain traces of fertiliser thus contaminating your sample and not providing you with a true representation of soil quality.

Do not include grass or roots with your soil sample

Including any living matter such as leaves, thatch, moss or roots in your sample will not provide an accurate representation of your soil quality.

Methods of sampling

For sampling on fine turf areas (bowling greens etc):

Use a sampling core as in the picture to the right. You can then remove the 1 ½ inches to place back into the soil to maintain appearance and playability.

For sampling on lawns or turf cut above 20mm:

Use a spade or shovel and cut straight down 4-6 inches in a triangle or square shape. Lift the section on the last cut and remove your soil sample before placing the section back down in the lawn.

