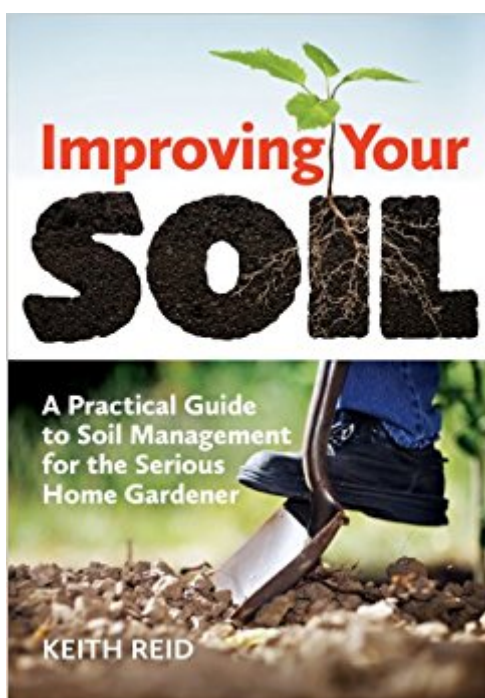


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# Improving Your Soil: A Practical Guide To Soil Management For The Serious Home Gardener



## Synopsis

Valuable advice from an expert in soil science. Intended for both small and medium-size gardens, *Improving Your Soil* reveals the steps to take to achieve the perfect soil base in which to grow plants. With directions on amending poor soil, modifying mediocre earth, aerating compacted topsoil and substrates, and testing pH levels, this book enables gardeners to nurture their plants and promote more abundant growth. The features of good soil include proper structure and nutrients that encourage healthy plant growth. Soil in "good tilth" is loamy, nutrient-rich and friable because it has an optimal mixture of sand, clay and organic matter that prevents severe compaction. *Improving Your Soil* shows gardeners how to improve the soil in their garden to encourage good seed bedding and a strong root system for proper nutrient disbursement throughout various soil depths. Flower gardeners and vegetable gardeners will all benefit from the tips and methods in *Improving Your Soil*. Topics include: What your soil can tell you about how you need to manage it Soil texture and structure -- building soil tilth Using amendments to correct soil problems, such as clay or sandy soil Creating a good environment for plant growth in different situations Providing the right amount of water for plants The teeming microscopic world of soils Building soil organic matter Crop rotations Types of compost and how to make good compost Managing soils to minimize pest and disease problems Feeding the plants -- the nutrients they need, and how to get them there Overcoming common nutrient deficiencies Organic vs. mineral fertilizers. The detailed information is complemented with line drawings, diagrams and illustrations that demonstrate various soil issues and how to resolve common problems. With information on remedying specific problems with particular plants, *Improving Your Soil* will be an often-consulted resource for all gardeners.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Firefly Books (February 27, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1770852263

ISBN-13: 978-1770852266

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.8 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #873,982 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Soil](#) #138 in [Books > Science & Math >](#)

## Customer Reviews

If you have ever wondered how your soil makes an impact on your home garden, this title is the perfect primer. After a discussion of what happens underground as each season passes, the author breaks down how soil is structured and what you can do to manage it successfully. Identifying soil type, creating a proper irrigation system and conquering common soil problems just scratch the surface of what is contained in this comprehensive guide. Reid, who has more than 30 years of experience in soil management, has written a highly readable and practical book for avid gardeners. (Green Bay Press-Gazette 2015-03-22) Improving Your Soil features a reader-friendly discussion, organization and format -- feats indeed, considering the wealth of scientific information included in this book. I don't think the topic of soil can be covered better than Keith Reid has managed here. (William Scheick Texas Gardener 2014-05-07) Before you order that load of topsoil or begin stockpiling compost, I recommend reading (this) excellent book by Keith Reid, a soil scientist at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada with over 30 years' experience.... In it, the author explains all aspects of soil and how it works. He begins by relating what's going on beneath our feet as each seasonal cycle passes, how heat, cold and moisture affect the microscopic life in the soil. He shows how to identify the kind of soil in your garden, explains how it feeds plants, and describes the structure and texture of soil. There's much, much more, including a bit on soil chemistry, too, but don't let scientific references deter you. The author's stated goal is to demystify soil and offer practical methods that will allow you to grow a better garden. It's a fascinating read and I'd consider it essential reading for the serious gardener. It should convince anyone that the answer really does lie in the soil. (David Hobson Guelph Mercury--Waterloo Region Record 2014-03-29) (starred review) Reid, a soil scientist for more than 30 years, leads the reader through a detailed discussion of the subject at hand. In 13 chapters, the author covers soil analysis, the basics of soil chemistry, soil structure and the implications of both, water and irrigation issues, exploiting biological cycles in service of gardening and the all-important issue of how improve and manage long term fertility in gardens and fields. Also provided is a guide to the warning signs of common soil deficiencies and how to troubleshoot common problems.... The author conveys a complex topic in a straightforward and well organized manner, using a clear writing style to good effect. Although this is not a long book, it is a surprisingly complete book, one that avoids both obfuscation and oversimplification. Intended for avid gardeners, it can also stand as an example of how to write popular science books.

(Publishers Weekly 2014-04-11)Improving Your Soil delves deeply into the intriguing mysteries of the foundation, and soul, of the garden. For such a detailed and technical book, (it) is remarkably inspiring as it explains how soil works to maintain healthy plant life... (Includes) an extensive roster of tips on assessing soil, along with realistic steps for improvement. (Helen Chesnut Victoria Times-Colonist 2014-05-01)This book is so comprehensive, it would make an excellent textbook for an entry level college course on soils... Improving Your Soil will not only give you a better understanding of soil in general and how it works, but also will help you make more informed choices to improve and manage its performance in your own garden. (Jeff Lowenfels American Gardener 2014-08-01)Soil scientist Keith Reid reveals the steps to take to achieve the perfect soil base in which to grow plants... Improving Your Soil shows gardeners how to improve the soil in their garden to encourage good seed bedding and a strong root system for proper nutrient disbursement throughout various soil depths. The detailed information is complemented with line drawings, diagrams and illustrations that demonstrate various soil issues and how to resolve common problems. (Calgary Sun 2014-07-01)Improving Your Soil features a reader-friendly discussion, organization and format -- feats indeed, considering the wealth of scientific information included in this book. I don't think the topic of soil can be covered better than Keith Reid has managed here. (William Scheick Seeds 2014-05-07)This book is great source of information that is easily understood and applied in the home garden.... Whether we realize it or not, identifying your specific type of soil, the importance of the content of the soil, and how it functions are all crucial to any home gardener or landscaper. Not understanding the soil that you are working with could become a growing challenge.... Soil health translates into healthier plants and a happier homeowner....This was a terrific book and I would highly recommend it to the homeowner who wants to build a strong, healthy foundation of soil to grow in. (Teresa Speight Washington Gardener 2015-04-01)

Keith Reid is a soil scientist who works as a manager at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada assessing and advising growers about soil issues.

This is an excellent book for the serious home gardener. It covers a wealth of technical details resulting from the best soil science currently available. Yet, it covers these details in common everyday language. It is very down to earth (excuse the pun) in its treatment of complex issues related to improvement of garden soils and crop success. It is useful for both those interested in organic farming, such as myself, and those who practice traditional farming practices. The principles it presents apply to the home garden as well as the large farm. It is by far the best book of its kind I

have read.

Really thorough and readable.

Great explanation of the soil and its many levels of complexity. A must have for the serious gardener who wants to avoid unnecessary and ineffective soil modifications - and to provide your plantings with the best chances for success!

Technical but readable if you pay attention. Good overview of various issues in soil to improve gardening.

Rather limited information, not as much good information as I had hoped.

Very. Interesting reading on soils and how they behave to management techniques.

This is a wonderfully written book. We are organic farmers of 10 years and I have always been at a disadvantage because of a lack of a science background. It is clearly written, and the author makes what is usually presented as a fairly dry topic and turns it into a page turner. We are always looking for good ways to convey these complex topics to our farm interns, and we have now found it. Great illustrations, good descriptions and a nice flow. It is clear that the author loves soils and I came away excited to explore our soils further.

I've been gardening for 46 years. This book was recommended by the American Horticultural Society in their publications. This book is worthless.

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