

Key to Soil texture. **Start here**

**Safe fieldwork**

We don’t advise you to work on your own. Make sure that you know what to do in an emergency. Take a responsible friend who can help if things go wrong. Ensure that you have permission from the landowner to dig holes on their land. Wear plastic gloves and wash your hands before eating. Cover any open wounds before starting the activity.

k

Clay

j

Silty

clay

i

Sandy

clay

In

between

Very

smooth

Very

gritty

Take a pinch of soil and add water to make it very wet. Rub it between your fingers. How gritty does the soil feel?

Take a pinch of soil and add water to make it very wet. Rub it between your fingers. How gritty does the soil feel?

Very

gritty

Very

smooth

In

between

f

Sandy

Clay

loam

g

Silty

Clay

loam

h

Clay

loam

e

Loam

d

Silty

loam

c

Sandy loam

Very

smooth

In

between

Very

gritty

Take a pinch of soil and add water to make it very wet. Rub it between your fingers. How gritty does the soil feel?

Is the soil ‘ribbon’

longer than 5cm before it breaks?

Is the soil ‘ribbon’

between 2.5cm and 5cm long before it breaks?

Is the soil ‘ribbon’

less than 2.5cm long before it breaks?

Now feed the

ribbon through your hand so that it supports its own weight.

**D**

Can you pinch the

ball to make a flat ribbon of about 3mm thickness?

**C**

C

D

B

**A**

**A Sand**

Squeeze the soil in your palm. Can

you form it into a ball?

**B**

Put some soil

about the same volume as an egg in the palm of your hand. Add drops of water and work the soil with your fingers to break down any lumps.

Add sufficient water until the soil is evenly moist and feels like putty.

**A**