



Blend Your Own Living Soil

*Three foundational recipes,
from first mix to full season*



grown with love

soilandsporesociety.com



What to do first

Good soil grows good plants. These are three foundational recipes every grower should know. They are starting points, not secrets. Learn them, then make them yours.

1. Read all three recipes and pick the one that fits you. New growers start with recipe one.
2. Gather everything on the shopping list before you mix.
3. Plan to cook your mix for 2 to 4 weeks before planting. Start early.

Two rules for every recipe

- ◆ A part can be any container. A bucket, a pot, a scoop. Just use the same one for every part.
- ◆ These recipes feed the soil, and the soil feeds the plant.
- ◆ Wear a dust mask when you handle dry minerals like perlite and rock dust.



Recipe one: the simple base

Three ingredients. Nothing fancy. This is where every grower should start.

The base mix

Peat moss or coco coir	1 part
------------------------	--------

Perlite or pumice	1 part
-------------------	--------

Finished compost	1 part
------------------	--------

Per cubic foot of mix, add

Kelp meal	1/2 cup
-----------	---------

Neem seed meal	1/2 cup
----------------	---------

Basalt rock dust	1 cup
------------------	-------

Gypsum	1/2 cup
--------	---------



Recipe two: the rich base

For growers who want the soil to carry more of the season. Richer food up front, less work later.

The base mix

Peat moss	1 part
-----------	--------

Worm castings	1 part
---------------	--------

Perlite or pumice	1 part
-------------------	--------

Per cubic foot of mix, add

Kelp meal	1/2 cup
-----------	---------

Neem seed meal	1/2 cup
----------------	---------

Crab meal	1/2 cup
-----------	---------

Basalt rock dust	1 cup
------------------	-------

Gypsum	1/2 cup
--------	---------

Langbeinite	1/4 cup
-------------	---------



Recipe three: the seedling mix

Young roots want a gentle start. Go light on food here.

The mix

Coco coir or peat moss	2 parts
------------------------	---------

Perlite	1 part
---------	--------

Worm castings	1 part
---------------	--------

No extra meals needed

This mix is ready as soon as it is moist. Use it for seeds and young seedlings, then move them into recipe one or two when they are established.



How to mix a batch

1. Lay out a tarp. Measure your parts into a pile.
2. Sprinkle the meals and minerals over the top as you go.
3. Turn the pile with a shovel until the color is even all the way through.
4. Wet it as you mix. Aim for the feel of a wrung out sponge.
5. It should smell like a forest floor. That smell means it is alive.

The squeeze test

1. Grab a handful and squeeze it tight.
2. It should hold together, then crumble when you poke it.
3. If water drips out, it is too wet. Add dry mix.
4. If it falls apart instantly, it is too dry. Add water.



How to cook it

Fresh mix is full of raw energy. Cooking lets it settle into food your plant can use.

- ◆ Pile the moist mix in a tote or on a tarp and cover it loosely.
- ◆ Keep it damp, like a wrung out sponge, for 2 to 4 weeks.
- ◆ Warmth speeds it up. 70 to 80 degrees is the sweet spot.
- ◆ Turn it once a week so every part gets air.

Ready checklist

- ◆ It smells earthy and sweet, never sour or sharp.
- ◆ It is damp all the way through, not dry in the middle.
- ◆ The color looks even, no pale dry pockets.
- ◆ At least 2 weeks have passed, 4 is better.



Amending through the season

Living soil is not set and forget. Feed the soil and it keeps feeding the plant.

When and what

Early growth	Top dress with compost and worm castings every few
Flowers begin	Top dress with kelp meal and a dry amendment made
Every watering	Plain water most days. Less is more
Season end	Reamend the same soil and run it again

How to top dress

1. Sprinkle the amendment evenly over the soil surface.
2. Scratch it lightly into the top inch with your fingers.
3. Water it in gently.
4. Good soil gets better with age. Keep it living.