



The 7 Healthy Soil Habits

1 SET A GOAL

A habit for gardening and life. Achieve /what matters most by focusing on **one** thing at a time. Can you check it off within 3 months? If not, break it into smaller goals.

2 OBSERVE

Practice observation each day and each season, no matter the weather. Walk, watch, listen, smell, taste, and touch. A microscope and lab tests can help you “see” even more.

3 INCREASE ORGANIC MATTER

Composting is a keystone habit. All gardening work (and play) becomes easier when you create continuous systems to get organic matter broken down and to the garden.

4 LAYER ON MULCH

Use mulch in most (but not all) areas to suppress weeds and protect your soil from compaction, erosion, and evaporation. Bonus—mulch increases organic matter, too!

5 ALWAYS BE GROWING

Plants are soil-building partners. Perennials and cover crops provide year-round food and homes for soil microbes, and they can also be sources for compost and mulch.

6 ROTATE ANNUALS

Reduce disease in your veggie patch by “starving” plant-specific pathogens. Use a rotation that makes it easy to keep track what grows where over the years.

7 TEND BIODIVERSITY

Plant, welcome, and encourage many forms of life. Biodiversity in and above the soil makes our gardens stronger, more resilient, and more interesting.