

Mix It Up: Make Potting Soil

Invite students to make potting soil by following a recipe. The recipe below can be blown up onto a poster for students to read together, or handed out like a recipe card, together with the explanations of what each ingredient contributes to the soil mix. You can find the ingredients for making potting soil at your local gardening center.

Blood meal: Rich in nitrogen

Bone meal: Rich in phosphorus

Egg shells: Rich in calcium

Wood ash: Adds potassium

Lime: An alkaline, it can help neutralize acidic soil

Perlite: A naturally occurring volcanic glass that pops like popcorn when heated. It improves aeration by keeping soil loose and preventing compaction.

Peat moss: holds water and air; contains few nutrients

Potting Soil Recipe

BASE FERTILIZER

- ¼ cup blood meal
- ¼ cup bone meal
- ¼ cup egg shells
- ½ cup wood ash

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS

- ½ bucket peat moss (5 gallon bucket)
- 2 tbsp. lime
- ⅓ bucket perlite
- 1 ¼ c. Base Fertilizer (see above)
- ¼ bucket top soil
- ⅓ bucket compost

INSTRUCTIONS

1. First, mix together ingredients for Base Fertilizer.
2. Mix remaining ingredients together. *(To help students measure the correct amount of "bucket" ingredients, make lines for ¼'s and ⅓'s on the bucket)*
3. Add water until damp.

Use your potting mix to start seeds for your school garden or to take the plants home for the summer.

