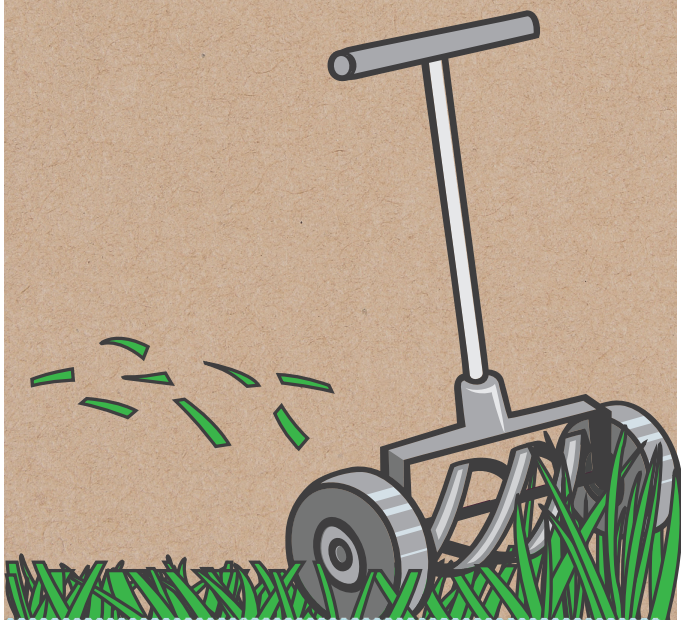




# TIME TO FERTILIZE

*or is it?*

Follow our guidelines before fertilizing...  
it might **save you money**,  
it will definitely **save our waterways**.



BEFORE YOU FERTILIZE

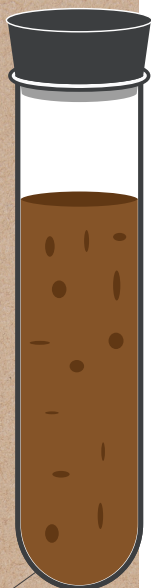
*test your soil*





# Test, don't just guess about fertilizing.

Testing your soil allows you to see what, if any, nutrients your lawn is lacking.



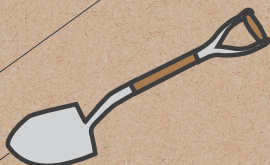
## YOU'LL NEED

**1 Soil test kit**

**2 Stainless steel or chrome-plated soil probe, hand garden trowel, shovel or spade**

Do not use brass, bronze or galvanized tools because they will contaminate samples with copper and/or zinc.

**3 Clean plastic bucket or container**



Visit [askHRgreen.org/put-your-soil-to-the-test](https://askHRgreen.org/put-your-soil-to-the-test) for more info.

See back page for a list of locations where you can pick up a soil test kit.







# soil testing guidelines

## WHEN

Take a soil sample a few months before initiating any new landscaping. In Hampton Roads, it's best to test every two to three years.

## HOW

Open a hole with a shovel, spade or trowel from the surface to the proper depth for your landscape area, about 2 to 4 inches for established lawns. Set that soil aside. If you are using a soil probe, insert it into the soil to the proper depth and remove the plug from the ground.



With your shovel or trowel remove a 1 inch thick slice from the smooth side of the open hole.

With the slice of soil on the blade of the shovel, remove the sides of the slice with a trowel knife or your hands to create a ribbon of soil 2 inches wide and 1 inch thick of the proper depth. Place the ribbon (or plug if using a soil probe) into a container.

## WHERE

To obtain accurate soil test results, a soil sample must be made up of multiple sub-samples. These sub-samples are mixed together to make up the composite soil sample for that lawn. For a typical lawn, it is recommended that two sub-samples be collected from the front yard and two be collected from the back yard.



Remove any surface mat of grass, litter and any rocks. Place the soil in a clean bucket or container. Remember that a clean, plastic container is best.

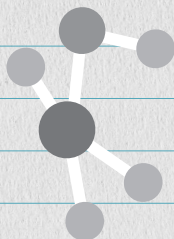


Continue to take additional soil sub-samples from the uniform landscape area. By mixing these sub-samples together, you create the composite sample that will be sent to the Soil Testing Laboratory.

## SOIL TEST REPORT

You will learn the following information about your soil

pH (whether it's acidic or basic)  
Phosphorous (**P**) content  
Potassium (**K**) content  
Calcium (**Ca**) content  
Magnesium (**Mg**) content  
Zinc (**Zn**) content  
Manganese (**Mn**) content  
Copper (**Cu**) content  
Iron (**Fe**) content  
Boron (**B**) content



A soil test is not usually performed for the presence of N (nitrogen). Soil Testing Laboratories still provide nitrogen fertilizer recommendations. You can often use much less than is recommended to get successful results. **You may not need to use any fertilizer if you are mulching your grass clippings back onto your lawn.** In Hampton Roads, our soil is naturally rich in phosphorus so, with the exception of new plantings, adding phosphorus is often not necessary.



If your soil test indicates you need to fertilize, **make sure** you fertilize at the right time of year for your grass.



### *Cool season grasses*

**Tall fescue**

**Fine fescue**

} mow to 2-3"

**Ryegrass** mow to 1 ½ - 2 ½"

- ideal for areas that get light shade
- seed in late summer
- if needed, fertilize in fall
- mow at higher heights during summer months



### *Warm season grasses*

**Zoysiagrass** mow to ¾ to 1"

**Centipedegrass** mow to 1 ½"

**Bermuda grass** mow to ½ - 1"

- ideal for areas that get full sun
- seed in early spring
- if needed, fertilize in spring

### **CHOOSE SLOW-RELEASE FERTILIZERS**

Coated & water insoluble slow-release fertilizers help roots develop and wash away less easily. Do not apply slow- or time-released nitrogen at rates above one pound per 1,000 square feet. Apply only as much as it says.

for more **FERTILIZING** information  
**askHRgreen.org**



 / askHRgreen

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# GOOD to DO

Pick up a soil test kit today at your local garden store or a Virginia Cooperative Extension office near you...

**CHESAPEAKE**

310 Shea Drive  
Chesapeake, VA 23322  
757.382.6348

**GLOUCESTER COUNTY**

7400 Carriage Court  
Gloucester, VA 23061  
804.693.2602

**HAMPTON**

1919 Commerce Dr., Ste 340  
Hampton, VA 23666  
757.727.1401

**ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY**

Public Services Center  
17100 Monument Circle, Ste B  
Isle of Wight, VA 23397  
757.365.6261

**JAMES CITY COUNTY/  
WILLIAMSBURG**

3127 Forge Rd. P.O. Box 69  
Toano, VA 23168  
757.564.2170

**NEWPORT NEWS**

739 Thimble Shoals Blvd.,  
Ste 1009  
Newport News, VA 23606  
757.591.4838

**NORFOLK**

830 Southampton Ave.,  
Ste 2069  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757.683.2816

**PORTSMOUTH**

105 Utah Street  
Portsmouth, VA 23701  
757.393.5197

**SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY**

21300 Plank Road  
Courtland, VA 23837  
757.653.2572

**SUFFOLK**

440 Market Street  
P.O. Box 218  
Suffolk, VA 23434  
757.514.4330

**SURRY COUNTY**

45 School Street  
Surry Government Center  
Surry, VA 23883  
757.294.5215

**VIRGINIA BEACH**

2449 Princess Anne Road  
Building #14, 2nd Floor  
Virginia Beach Municipal  
Center  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456  
757.385.4769

**YORK COUNTY/  
POQUOSON**

100 County Drive  
Yorktown, VA 23690  
757.890.4940



for more FERTILIZING information

**askHRgreen.org**



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