



SOIL BLOCKS

Gardening with the Masters 2024 Spring Event Table Talk
By Minnehaha Master Gardeners: Ann Larson, Deb Johnson and Diane Vanderlinde

Gather the equipment

- Tub
- Soil*
- Water and watering can
- Tool to mix with
- Block maker
- Flats
- Tape and water-proof marker



*There are many different potting mixtures suggested on-line. Additives include peat, perlite, vermiculite, coconut coir, and other materials. Do not use the seed starter mix that is commercially available – it is too light and fluffy – blocks won't stay together! Your trial and error will determine what mixture works best for you.

1. Mix soil and water to the correct consistency. Remove all twigs and stones. Not real soupy, not real dry...a handful, when squeezed, water runs down your hand.
2. Push the block maker firmly into the soil mixture. You may need to repeat this a couple times. Look at the bottom of the block maker to ensure soil is packed in. If not filled to the bottom, pack it in by hand. Level off the bottom so all soil is inside the mold.
3. Place block maker in tray, push down on the handle. Lift block maker. Blocks should stay together. If crumbling, put back in tub and add more water.
4. Place in flat. Leave ¼ inch between rows of blocks for watering purposes.
5. Place seeds into the depressions. Cover with a thin layer of dry soil or vermiculite.
6. Mark the name of seeds and date planted on tape on outside of flat.
7. Cover with plastic dome or clear plastic wrap. Watch closely for emerging seedlings.
8. Be sure to clean the soil block maker after use.
9. Will not have to water for a couple days if the soil is correct consistency. **You do not want them to be soggy, but do Not let the soil blocks dry out! Always water from bottom.**
10. Germination rules and care for seedlings apply just as when using other kinds of containers.

References:

- Johnny's Selected Seeds: www.johnnyseeds.com
- The Seasonal Homestead
 - You Tube – How to Make Soil Blocks #self sufficiency #gardening tips

Thanks to Megan and Dan, Iron Fox Farm, for their assistance and knowledge.

