

5.3 TYPES OF SOIL

SOIL

- Soil is the **thin, loose layer of matter on the surface** of the Earth's crust.
- Soil is made of two main components:
 - Fragments of **rocks and minerals**
 - **Organic matter** (decomposing living things) – we often call this layer humus

SOIL PARTICLES

- Soils are classified by the proportion of the different particles
- These particles are classified based on their size

SOIL PARTICLES

- Clay – less than 0.002 mm
- Loam – from 0.002 mm to 0.05 mm
- Sand – from 0.05 mm to 2 mm
- Gravel – larger than 2 mm

Sand, Silt, and Clay



SOIL TYPES

- **Clay soil**
 - Mostly made up of clay
 - Since particles are so small they **stick together** very easily like Play-Doh
 - **Soak up water very easily**



SOIL TYPES



- **Loamy soil**
 - Mostly made up of loam
 - Particles still very small but **more crumbly** than clay soils
 - Air and water move more easily through loamy soils than clay soils
 - Unfortunately means it **erodes more easily**

SOIL TYPES

- **Sandy soil**

- Mostly made up of sand
- Particles are larger and therefore there is more space to **let water through**
- Does not hold onto water very well



SOIL TYPES

- **Humus-bearing soil**
 - Mostly made up of **humus** (decomposed organic matter)
 - **Very rich in nutrients**



