

The Simple Science of
DIRT

by Emily James



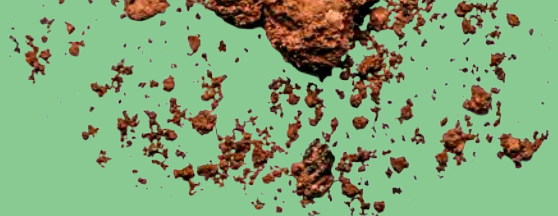


Table of CONTENTS

What Is Dirt?	4
Types of Dirt	8
Layers of Dirt	14
Who Lives in Dirt?	18
What Do We Use Dirt For?	22
How Can We Take Care of Dirt?	24
Dig In!	
Dig In!	28
Glossary	30
Read More	31
Internet Sites	31
Critical Thinking Questions	32
Index	32



A close-up photograph of a person's leg wearing blue jeans and a blue and white sneaker. The person is stepping on a baseball in a field of dirt. The background is a blurred field with trees in the distance. A large red watermark "For Review Only" is diagonally across the image.

What Is Dirt?

Look! Under your feet. What do you see?
Dirt! Dirt can be squishy, muddy,
or sandy.



You can dig, play, and plant flowers in it.
Dirt covers almost all the land on Earth.
But what is dirt?



Dirt is also called soil. Soil is a mix of different parts of nature. Rocks form one part. Sand, silt, and clay are pieces of rock that make up soil.

Pieces of leaves and twigs also make up soil. So do tiny parts of animals that lived long ago.



Dig In!

Soil is all around us. It is in gardens and parks. It is beneath the sidewalks and houses. Soil is not exactly the same everywhere. **What** is the soil made of **where** you live?

What You Need:

shovel

white paper plate

What You Do:

- Have an adult help you dig up one shovelful of soil. Make sure you dig down deep to get more than just the topsoil.
- Put the soil on the paper plate and spread it out.
- Look for leaves, sticks, bugs, worms, and rocks. Make a list of all the things you find.
- Pour some water on the area where you dug up the soil. Does the ground hold a puddle for a long time? Or does the water sink right away? What does that tell you about your soil?