

HUBCITY LANDSCAPING

SOIL GUIDE

Understanding the unique dirt of Lubbock and the South Plains is the first step to achieving a lush, resilient, and beautiful yard.

THE DIRT ON LUBBOCK DIRT

1. Amarillo Fine Sandy Loam

This is the official state soil of Texas and the most common topsoil in the Lubbock area. It drains reasonably well but dries out quickly due to the high winds and arid climate of the South Plains. Because it is sandy, it struggles to hold onto essential nutrients without help.

2. The Caliche Layer

Beneath our topsoil lies caliche—a rock-hard layer of calcium carbonate. Depending on your neighborhood, this layer might be several feet down, or right just a few inches beneath your grass. Caliche stops roots from growing deep and prevents water from draining properly, acting like an underground concrete patio.

3. High Alkalinity (High pH)

Lubbock soil and water are highly alkaline (pH of 7.5 to 8.0+). Many popular plants prefer slightly acidic soil. The high pH locks up essential nutrients like iron, causing a common local issue called "Iron Chlorosis," where plant leaves turn yellow while the veins stay green.

COMMON SOIL CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

Dry, Blowing Soil

The Problem: High winds strip topsoil and evaporate moisture rapidly.

The Solution: MULCH! Apply 3 to 4 inches of organic mulch (like shredded cedar or hardwood) around all plants and trees. Mulch acts as a blanket, blocking the wind, trapping moisture, and cooling the root zone.

Yellowing Leaves (Chlorosis)

The Problem: Plants can't absorb iron due to the high soil alkalinity.

The Solution: Choose alkaline-tolerant native plants (like Texas Sage or Red Yucca). For susceptible plants like Photinias or certain oaks, apply Chelated Iron soil drenches in the early spring.

Hard, Compacted Yards

The Problem: Heavy foot traffic and caliche make the soil as hard as a brick.

The Solution: Core aeration. Having your lawn aerated once a year pulls plugs of soil out of the ground, allowing air, water, and fertilizer to finally reach the root zone.

Low Organic Matter

The Problem: Sandy soils lack the rich organic material plants love.

The Solution: Topdress your lawn with a thin layer of compost in the spring, and mix heavy amounts of organic compost into flower beds before planting anything new.

3 STEPS TO BETTER SOUTH PLAINS SOIL

- **Amend Liberally:** Whenever you dig a hole for a new shrub or tree in Lubbock, mix the native dirt 50/50 with high-quality organic compost before putting it back in the hole.
- **Water Smart, Not Hard:** Because our soil dries on top but can pool water on the caliche layer below, avoid shallow, daily watering. Water deeply 2-3 times a week to encourage deep root growth.
- **Don't Fight Nature:** The best way to handle Lubbock soil is to plant things that love it. Choose drought-tolerant, alkaline-adapted Texas natives.

Tired of fighting the dirt?

Whether you need aeration, heavy mulching, or a total soil overhaul, our team knows exactly what Lubbock yards need to thrive.

A helpful resource provided by landscapinglubbocktx.com