

Soil in India – SSC Notes

1. Definition of Soil

- Soil: Upper layer of earth, formed by weathering of rocks, supports plant life
- Importance: Agriculture, forestry, water retention, ecosystem

2. Factors Affecting Soil Formation

1. Parent Rock / Geology → Determines mineral content
2. Climate → Rainfall, temperature, monsoon patterns
3. Relief / Topography → Plains → Deep, Valleys → Shallow
4. Vegetation & Organic Matter → Humus formation
5. Time → Older soils → More weathered

3. Major Types of Soils in India

Soil Type	Location	Features	Crops / Notes
Alluvial Soil	Indo-Gangetic Plains, Coastal plains	Fertile, fine particles, rich in potash & phosphates	Wheat, Rice, Sugarcane, Cotton
Black Soil / Regur	Deccan Plateau → Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat	Retains moisture, cracks in summer, clayey	Cotton, Soybean, Millets → “Black Cotton Soil”
Red & Yellow Soil	Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka	Iron-rich → Red colour, porous,	Millets, Pulses, Groundnut

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Laterite Soil	Kerala, Karnatak a, Tamil Nadu, Meghalay a	Iron & Aluminium rich, acidic, leached, poor fertility	Tea, Coffee, Rubber, Cashew
Arid / Desert Soil	Rajastha n, Gujarat, Haryana	Sandy, low moisture, saline patches	Milletts, Pulses → Requires irrigation
Forest / Mountain Soil	Himalaya s, Western & Eastern Ghats	Shallow, humus-rich, acidic	Tea, Coffee, Horticult ure
Peaty / Marshy Soil	Kerala, Odisha,	High organic matter,	Coconut, Paddy,

	Sundarba ns	waterlog ged, black	Sugarcan e
Saline & Alkaline Soil (Usar / Rakar)	Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab	Salty, infertile, white crust	Requires reclamati on → Halophyt es
Alluvial Deltaic Soil	Sundarba ns, Godavari, Krishna deltas	Very fertile, clayey & loamy	Rice, Sugarcan e, Jute

4. Soil Conservation Methods

- Terrace farming → Hills & slopes → Prevents erosion
- Contour ploughing → Plough along contours → Reduces runoff
- Afforestation / Reforestation → Roots bind soil
- Strip cropping / Crop rotation → Maintains fertility
- Bunding & Check Dams → Controls water erosion

5. Important SSC Points – Soil

- Alluvial soil → Most fertile → Indo-Gangetic Plains → Rice & Wheat
- Black soil → Deccan Plateau → Cotton → Retains moisture
- Red & Yellow → Iron-rich, less fertile → Millets & Pulses
- Laterite → Rainy & hilly areas → Tea & Coffee
- Arid → Rajasthan → Irrigation essential
- Peaty → Kerala / Sundarbans → High organic matter

- **Saline / Alkaline → Requires reclamation**
- **Soil erosion → Major problem → Terrace farming, afforestation**