

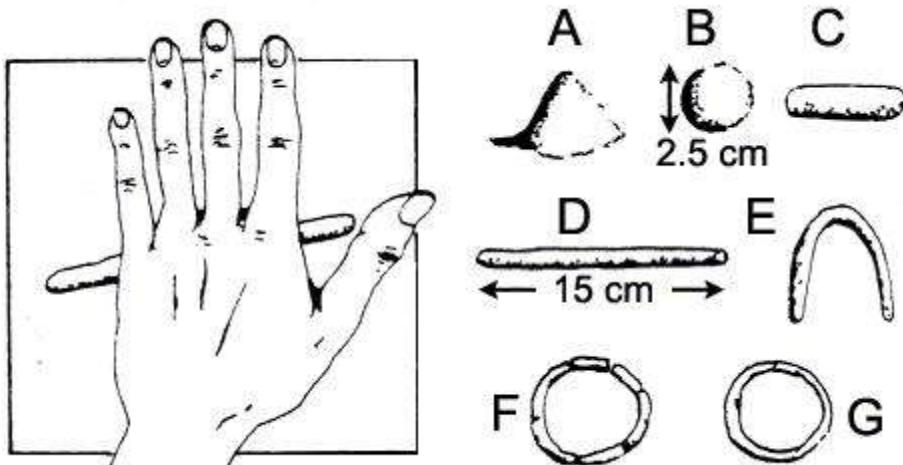


# Soils – Soil Texture by Feel

## Estimating Soil Texture by Feel (From Ilaco, 1985.)

Place approximately 1 tablespoon of fine, dry earth in the palm of your hand. Drip water slowly onto the soil until it approaches sticky point (i.e., the point at which the soil just begins to stick to your hand). Next form a ball about 2.5 cm in diameter. The extent to which the moist soil can be shaped is indicative of its texture.

- (A) **Sand** - Soil remains loose and single-grained; can only be heaped into a pyramid.
- (B) **Loamy sand** - The soil contains sufficient silt and clay to become somewhat cohesive; can be shaped into a ball that easily falls apart.
- (C) **Silt loam** - Same as for loamy sand but can be shaped by rolling into a short, thick cylinder.
- (D) **Loam** - About equal sand, silt, and clay means the soil can be rolled into a cylinder about 15 cm long that breaks when bent.
- (E) **Clay loam** - As for loam, although soil can be bent into a U, but no further, without being broken.
- (F) **Light clay** - Soil can be bent into a circle that shows cracks.
- (G) **Heavy clay** - Soil can be bent into a circle without showing cracks.



Note: With practice, this can give a good estimate of soil texture.

Prepared by Mark Bell, April, 2012.

Reference: Ilaco, 1985

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