

Notes on Composting and Double Digging to Improve the Soil

Composting to improve soil that has been depleted from overuse and chemical fertilizers. This method does not use fertilizers, so this will be a big saving to you.

Make as many compost piles as you can, the more you make and then put into your land the more healthy your crops will grow.

Compost improves the structure of your soil, making it easier to work and dig. It will help with water retention, when it rains the water will stay in the ground and not run off.

Compost provides natural nutrients for plant growth. Your soil will become healthy. Healthy soil produces healthy plants that are able to resist insect and disease attacks.

Compost is created from the decomposition of various forms of plant and animal life, such as leaves, grass, wood, garbage, hair...and soil. It is important to add soil to your compost pile.

Making the Compost

Build your compost pile under some shade of a tree if possible. Six feet away from the trunk. The minimum size for a pile should be 3 feet wide, by 3 feet high, by 3 feet long. But you can make them bigger.

1. To start the pile, loosen the ground underneath where the pile will be. To a depth of 12 inches.
2. Next lay down twigs, small branches, maize stalks, brush and woody material, at least 3 inches of these over the base of the pile.
3. Put down a 2 inch layer of mature material like dry weeds, leaves, straw, dry grass, hay, paper, cotton material. Anything that is dry. Even wood ash.
4. Put down a 2 inch layer of green material, like fresh weeds, green grass, green cover crops, seaweed, kitchen wastes, animal manure, like cow dung, chicken manure, not cat or dog manure.
5. Cover lightly with one half inch of soil and water lightly if possible.

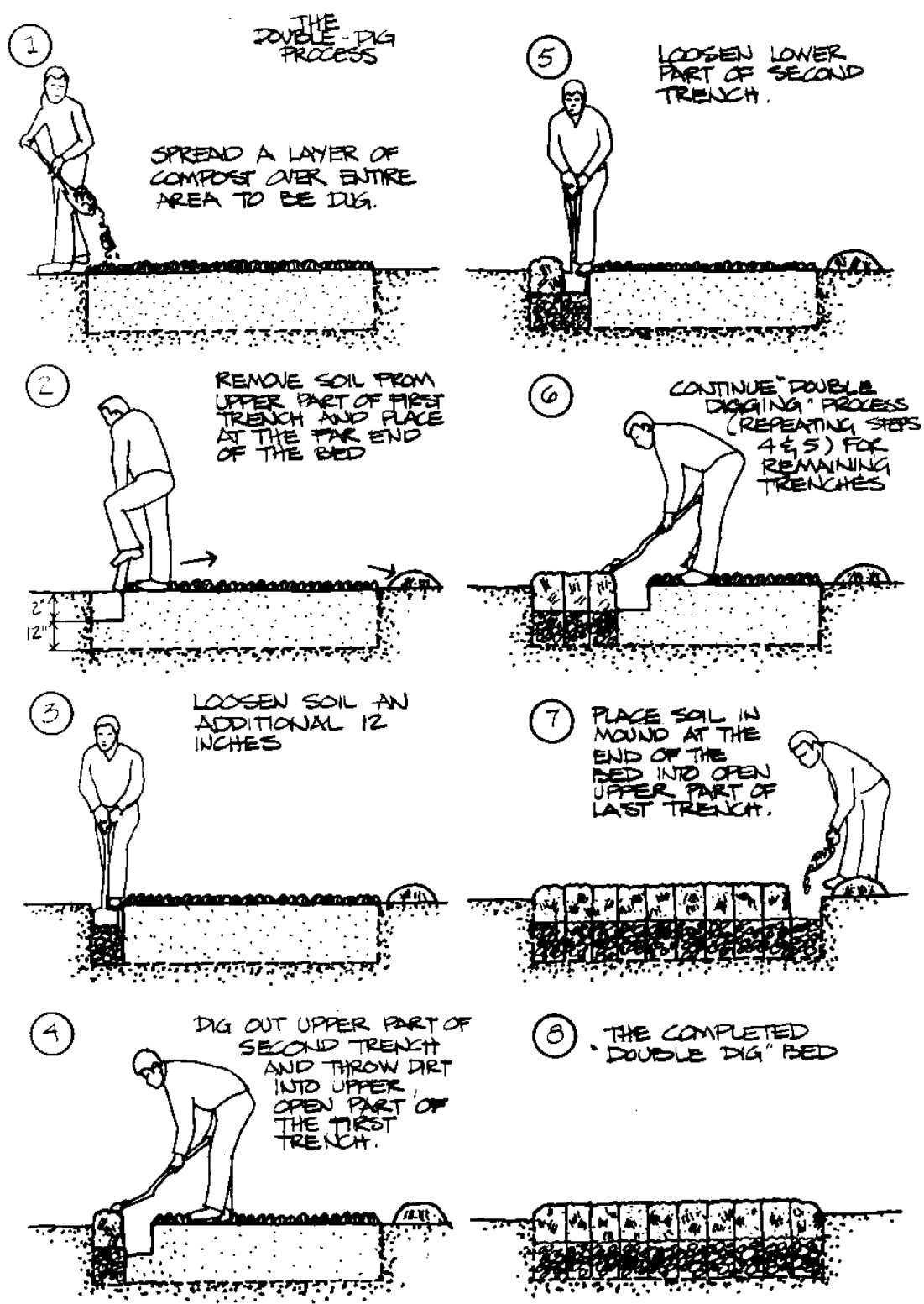
then repeat no 3 and 4 and 5,

then repeat again 3 and 4 and 5 until the pile reaches 3 or 4 feet high. Cover with soil a one inch layer. This pile is complete and you can start another pile.

Leave the pile until it is completely decomposed into good soil. This may take two to three months. To quicken decomposition, cut things into smaller pieces, etc like maize stalks, this will cause them to break down quicker. Then the compost can be dug into your garden.

Making compost piles each year and putting them into your garden will ensure that you have good crops and you will never need to use chemical fertilizers again.

Double Digging the Land to improve water retention and to improve the soil.



Try not to walk on the softened soil before planting as it will compact it. The whole garden bed is double dug and will retain water for a longer time.

You will only need to do this once to a garden bed. The best size for one garden bed is 3 feet wide by 5 feet long. Then you will not need to stand on the garden bed but can reach to the middle from the sides.