

Grid-Down Soil Prep Checklist

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1. Mindset Shift: Soil is Life

- Think of soil as a living ecosystem, not just dirt.
- Feed microbes, not just plants.
- Healthy soil = long-term food security.

2. Assess What You've Got

- Jar test: sand, silt, and clay layers show composition.
- Vinegar & baking soda test for pH.
- Count worms — more worms = healthier soil.
- Optional: Get a professional soil test while you can.

3. Feed the Soil Now

- Add compost, leaves, manure, and biochar.
- Use lasagna layering or deep mulch methods.
- Start now; healthy soil takes months to mature.

4. Composting for Independence

- Mix 3 parts browns (leaves, straw) to 1 part greens (scraps, manure).
- Turn the pile every couple of weeks.
- Keep moist but not soggy — ready by spring.

5. Water & Erosion Control

- Mulch heavily to conserve moisture.
- Add swales or trenches on contour lines.
- Collect rainwater now; store safely.
- Practice using manual pumps or gravity-fed systems.

6. Natural Fertility Boosters

- Wood ash = potassium (use lightly).
- Crushed eggshells = calcium.
- Epsom salt = magnesium.
- Comfrey or nettle tea = nitrogen and trace minerals.

7. Grid-Down Tools & Seeds

- Broadfork, hoe, shovel, and wheelbarrow.

- Buckets and mason jars for storage.
- Stock heirloom, open-pollinated seeds.
- Start a local seed swap or seed bank.

8. Your Call to Action

- Start small — even one bed makes a difference.
- Feed the soil year-round.
- Nothing leaves your land without giving back.
- Healthy soil = resilience, freedom, and life.

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