

## Preparing Your Location

Written by RSF

Tuesday, April 07, 2009 - 01:56 -

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- Remove all grass/sod
- “Old Paper Trick”

This is a good method to try in the late summer or early fall. Using old newspapers and big stones or wood boards, place sections of paper (1/8 to 1/4 inch thick) – weigh the paper with stones or boards. Cover the entire space with papers and secure thoroughly. Eventually the grass will die.

If you leave the papers in place over the winter, by spring the grass should be nice and dead. Alternatively, you could hold the paper down with a thick layer of manure, grass clippings, compost, or soil.

After the grass is dead, you can simply till up the area.

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- After you have removed the sod, remove any remaining grass clods, roots, or rocks
  - Prepare the soil with compost, manure, or peat moss
  - “Double Digging” – it’s really hard work, but the payoff is a high-quality garden bed that plants will help plants thrive.
  - Divide your garden into sections about the width of your spade.
  - Dig a 6-8 inch deep trench the length of the first section
  - Place the soil from the first section into a wheelbarrow or cart
  - Break up the subsoil with a spading fork, going down as far as you can. About 1 foot is ideal, but if it is very hard, just to the best you can.
- Remove any loose rock.

- Add a 2 to 4 inch layer of compost, rotted manure, or peat moss to the bottom of the trench.

- Repeat the process in the second section. But instead of placing the top soil in the wheelbarrow, put it in the first trench on top of the peat or compost

- Repeat this process in each section, each time placing the topsoil from the current trench in the previous trench. In the last trench, use the topsoil from the wheelbarrow.

- Finally, dress the top of the entire bed with a couple inches of compost or well rotted manure

Mix the top dressing with the top few inches of soil and r