

Soil Recipes for Gardening

Presented by Shelter International e.V.

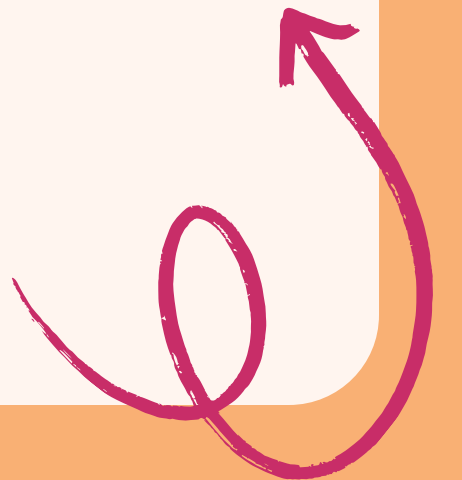


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Introduction to Soil Recipes

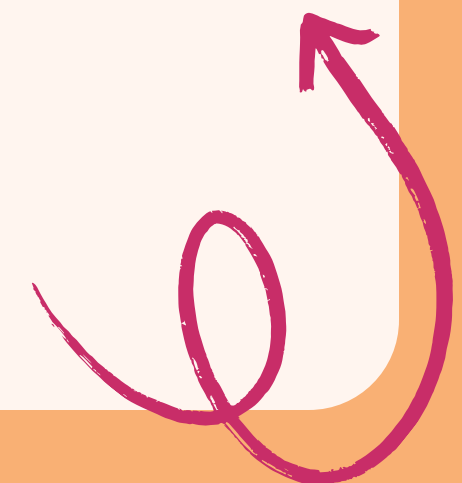
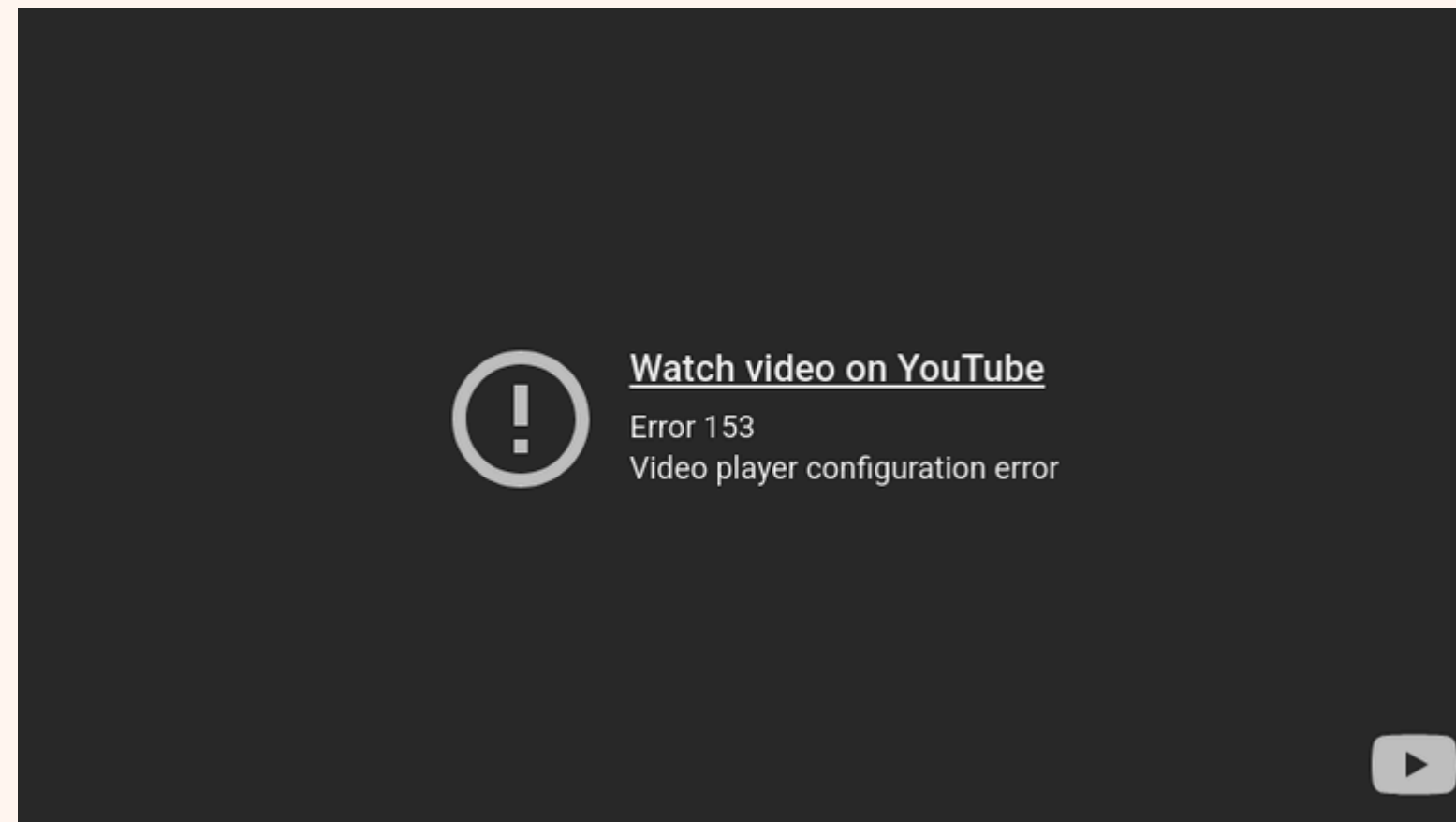
Tailoring mixes for optimal plant growth



Balcony vs. Garden Soil

Understanding Soil Needs for Containers

Container gardening requires careful attention to **drainage, aeration, and nutrient balance**. Unlike garden soil, balcony soil must support plant growth in limited space while ensuring proper moisture retention.



Universal Mix

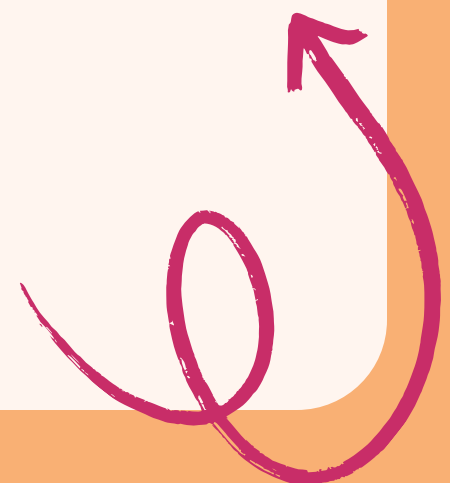
Essential recipes for thriving plants

Ingredients:

- 3 parts coco coir (or peat moss)
- 2 parts compost
- 1 part perlite
- 1 part vermiculite
- 1/2 part coarse sand (optional, for weight/drainage)

Mixing Instructions:

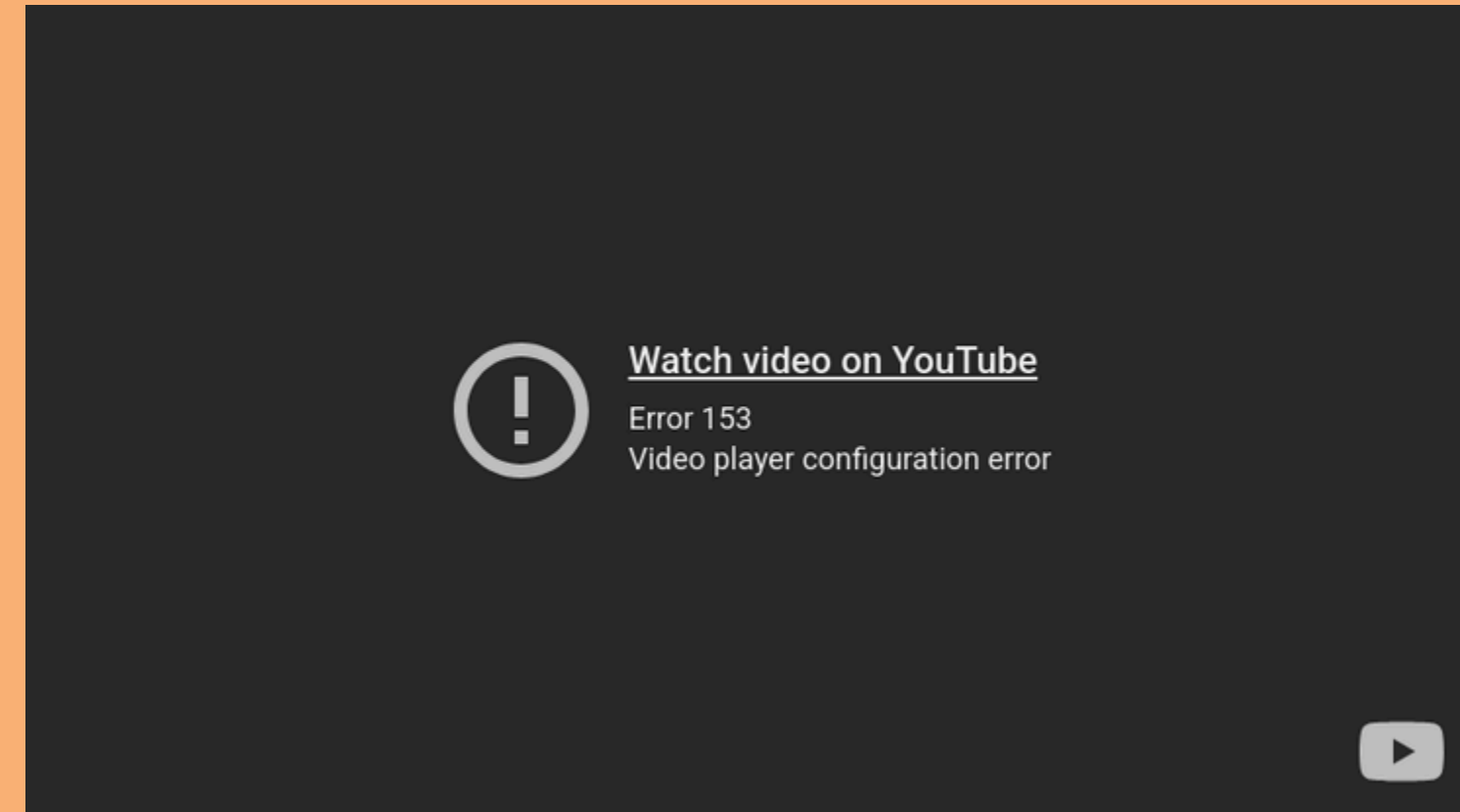
1. Rehydrate coco coir in large container (use warm water)
2. Break up any clumps in compost
3. Wet perlite to prevent dust
4. Combine all ingredients in large container or wheelbarrow
5. Mix thoroughly, ensuring even distribution





Universal Balcony Garden Mix

All-purpose mix for vibrant plants



This **versatile soil mix** is ideal for various vegetables like tomatoes and peppers, ensuring proper drainage and nutrient balance for healthy growth in balcony gardens.

Seed Starting Mix

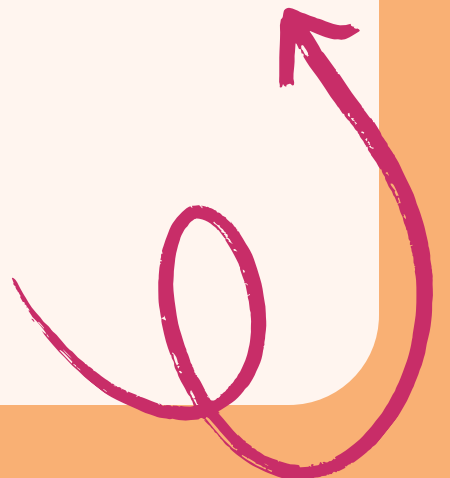
Ingredients:

- 2 parts coco coir (or peat moss)
- 2 parts vermiculite
- 1 part coarse sand
- 3 tbsp lime (if using peat)

Why different:

- Finer texture for delicate roots
- No compost (can harbor diseases for young seedlings)
- Maximum water retention for germination
- Sterile components reduce damping-off disease

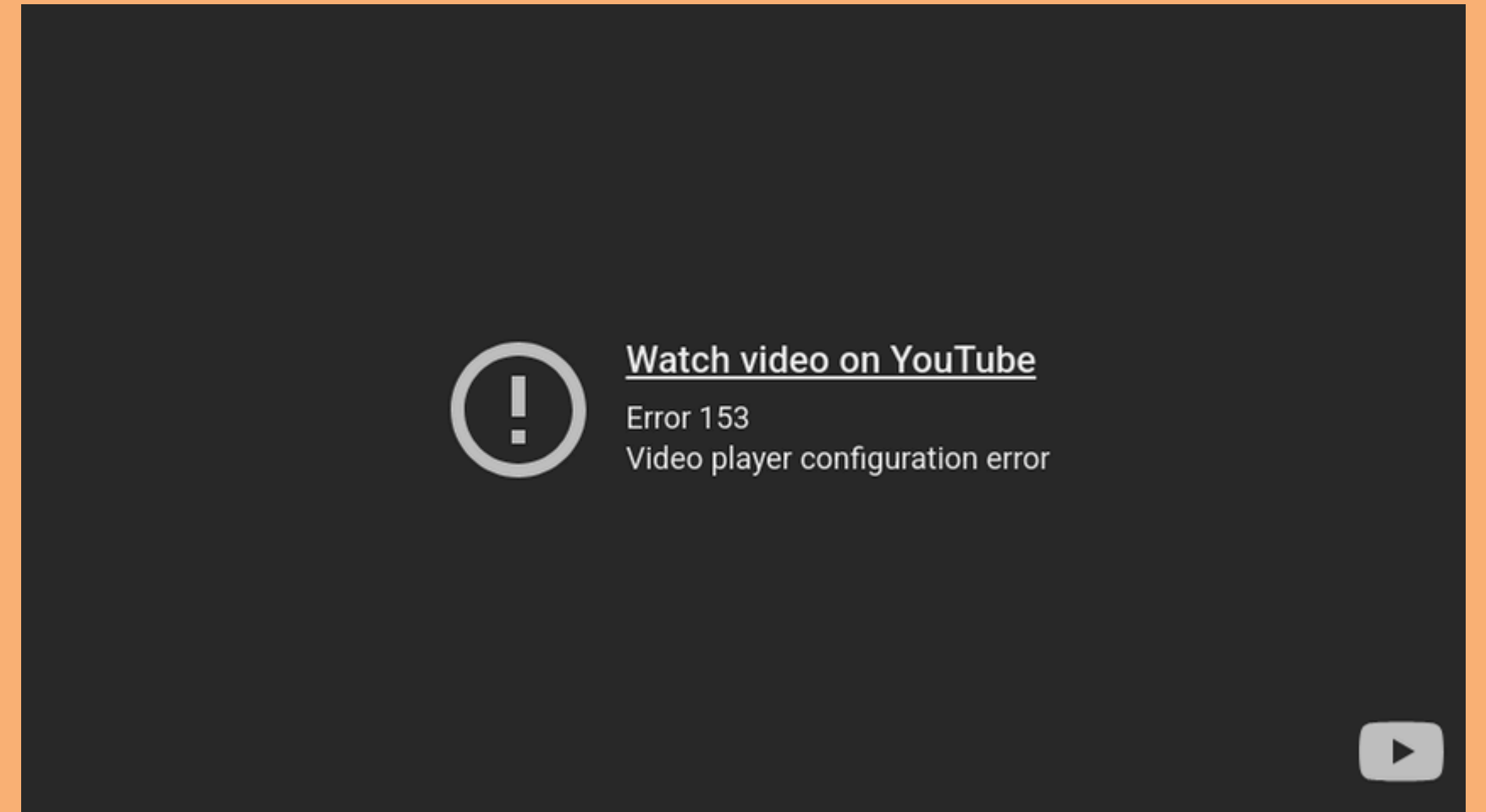
Best for: Starting all seeds indoors before transplanting





Seed Starting Mix

Lightweight and Fine-Textured Soil



A **high-quality seed starting mix** is essential for strong seedlings. This blend promotes delicate root development and ensures adequate moisture retention, setting the stage for healthy plant growth.

Transplanting and Herb Mixes

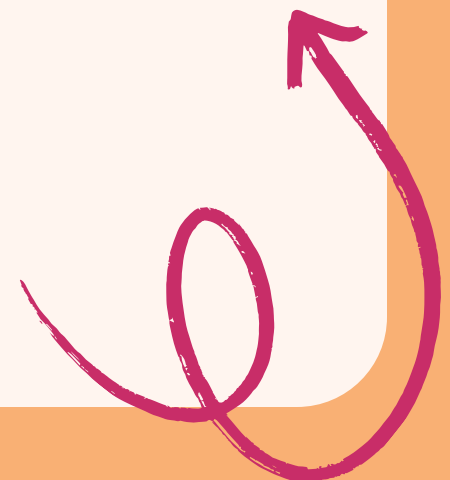
Optimize soil for healthy plant growth

Ingredients:

- 2 parts coco coir
- 2 parts vermiculite
- 1 part finely screened compost
- 3 tbsp lime (if needed)
- 2 tbsp organic fertilizer

Purpose: Bridges gap between seed starting and full-strength growing mix

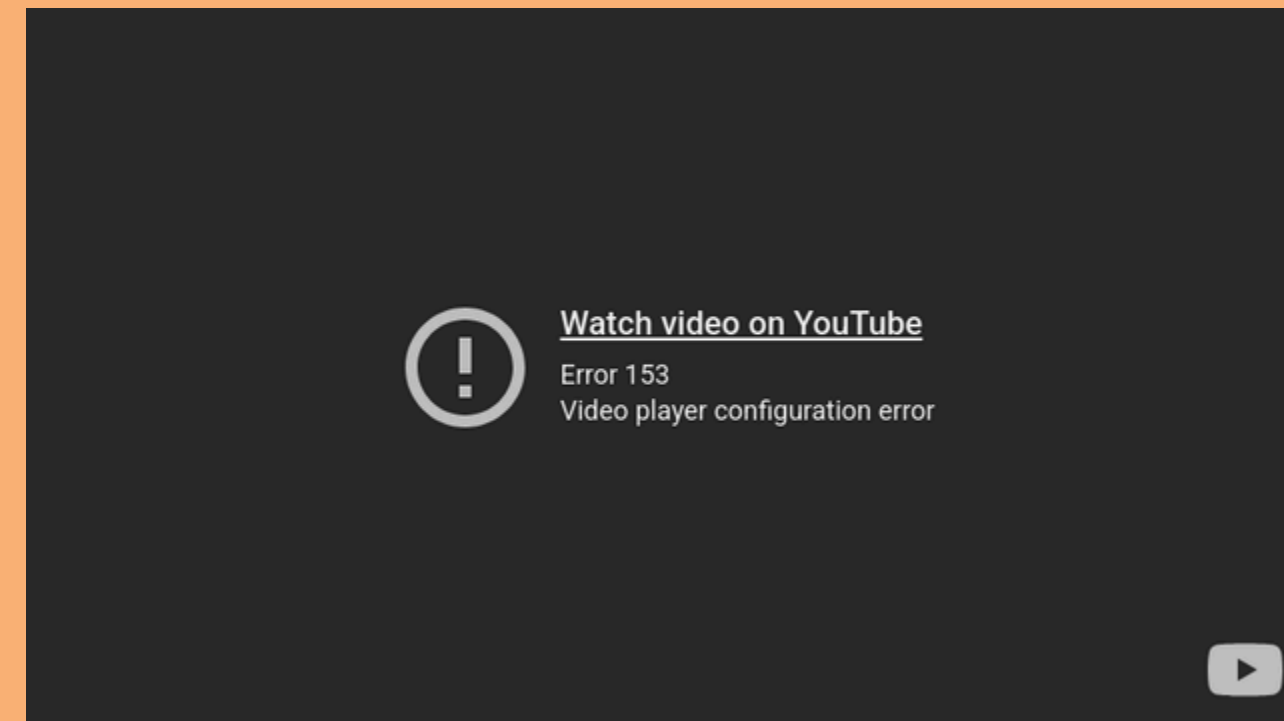
Best for: Transplanting seedlings to larger containers before final planting





Transplanting Seedling Mix

Gradual Nutrient Increase for Growth



This mix supports seedlings with a **gradual nutrient increase** and structure, essential for healthy growth during the transplant phase and before final potting into larger containers.

Mediterranean Herb Mixes

Ingredients:

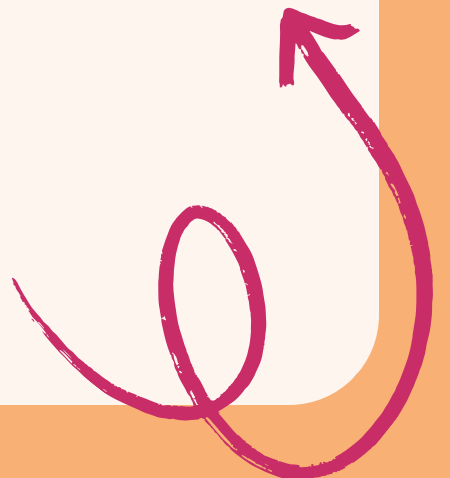
- 2 parts coco coir
- 1 part compost (reduced amount)
- 2 parts perlite
- 1 part coarse sand
- 1/2 part small gravel (for surface drainage)

Why different:

- Extra drainage for plants preferring dry conditions
- Lower nutrients (herbs grow better with less nitrogen)
- Mimics native Mediterranean rocky, poor soils

Best for: Rosemary, thyme, oregano, sage, lavender

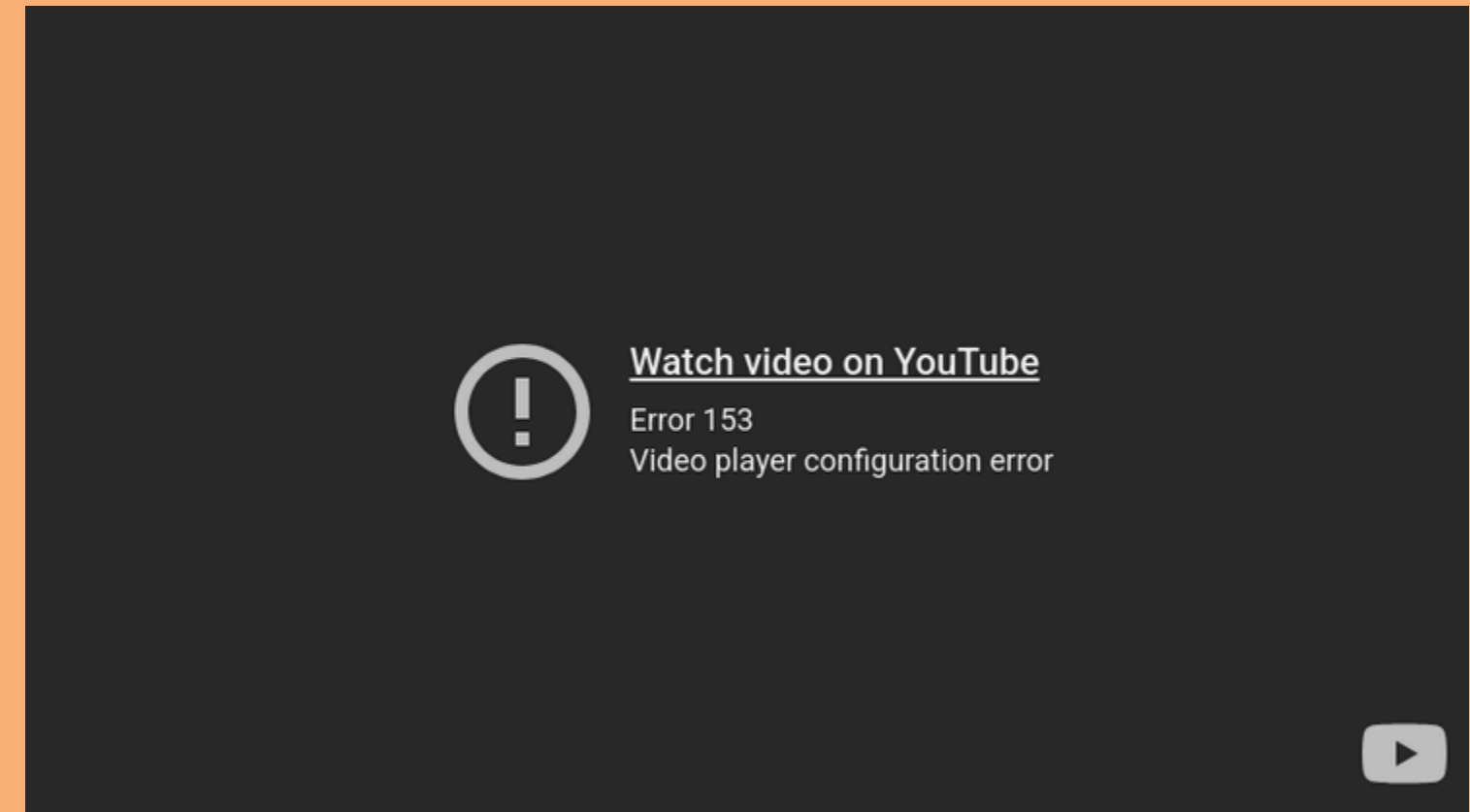
All Mediterranean herbs that prefer "lean" soil. These herbs develop stronger flavor in less fertile conditions





Mediterranean Herb Mix

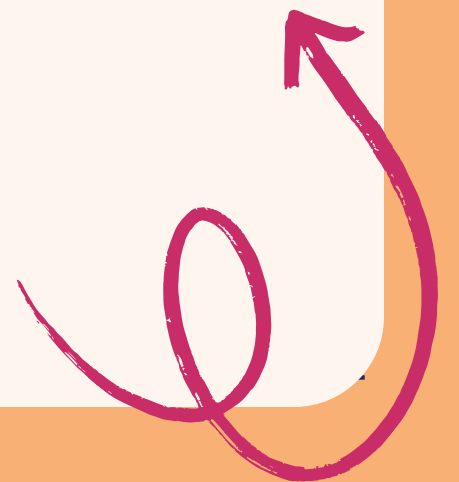
Well-Draining Soil for Flavor Enhancement



This **well-draining soil mix** mimics rocky native soils, ideal for Mediterranean herbs like rosemary and thyme. It enhances flavor and promotes healthy growth in containers.

Specialized Vegetable Soil Blends

Tailored mixes for optimal growth



Leafy Green & Herb Mix

Ingredients:

- 3 parts coco coir
- 3 parts compost (increased for nutrients)
- 1 part perlite
- 1 part vermiculite
- 1 cup worm castings per 10L

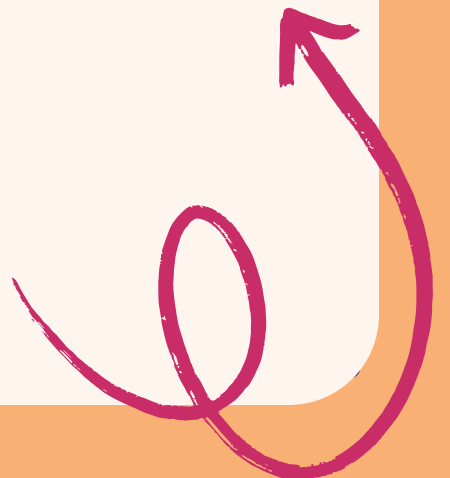
Why different:

Higher nitrogen for leaf production

More nutrients support rapid growth

Good water retention for consistent growth

Best for: Lettuce, spinach, chard, kale, basil, parsley, cilantro





Leafy Green Mix

High Nitrogen for Vigorous Growth

The **Leafy Green & Herb Mix** enhances nitrogen levels, promoting lush growth for plants like lettuce and spinach. This blend encourages robust leaf production in various container sizes.

Root Vegetable Mix

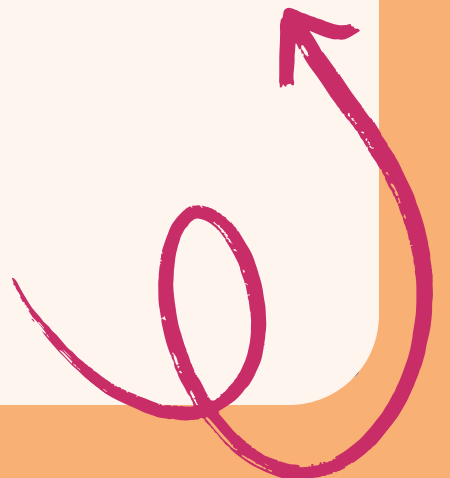
Ingredients:

- 3 parts coco coir
- 2 parts compost
- 2 parts perlite (extra aeration)
- 1 part vermiculite
- 1 part coarse sand
- 2 tbsp bone meal per 10L (for root development)

Why different:

- Extra loose texture allows root expansion
- Deep drainage (needs deep containers 40-50cm)
- Phosphorus for strong root growth

Best for: Carrots, radishes, beets, potatoes in grow bags





Root Vegetable Mix

Deep and Loose for Root Expansion

A **light and loose soil mix** is essential for root vegetables like carrots and beets, allowing for proper expansion and healthy growth in containers or grow bags.

Fruiting Vegetable Mix

Ingredients:

- 6 parts coco coir
- 4.5 parts compost
- 6 parts perlite
- 1/4 cup lime (if using peat)
- 1.5 cups organic fertilizer blend*

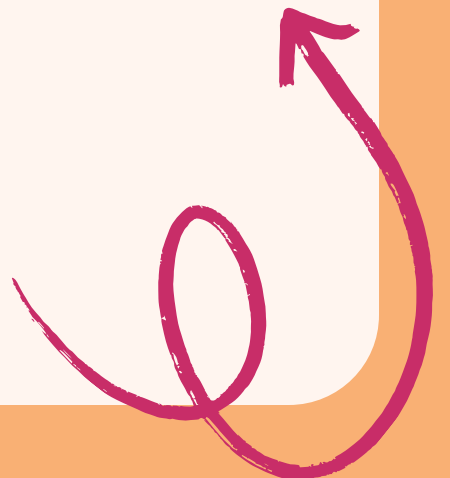
*DIY Fertilizer Blend (mix and store):

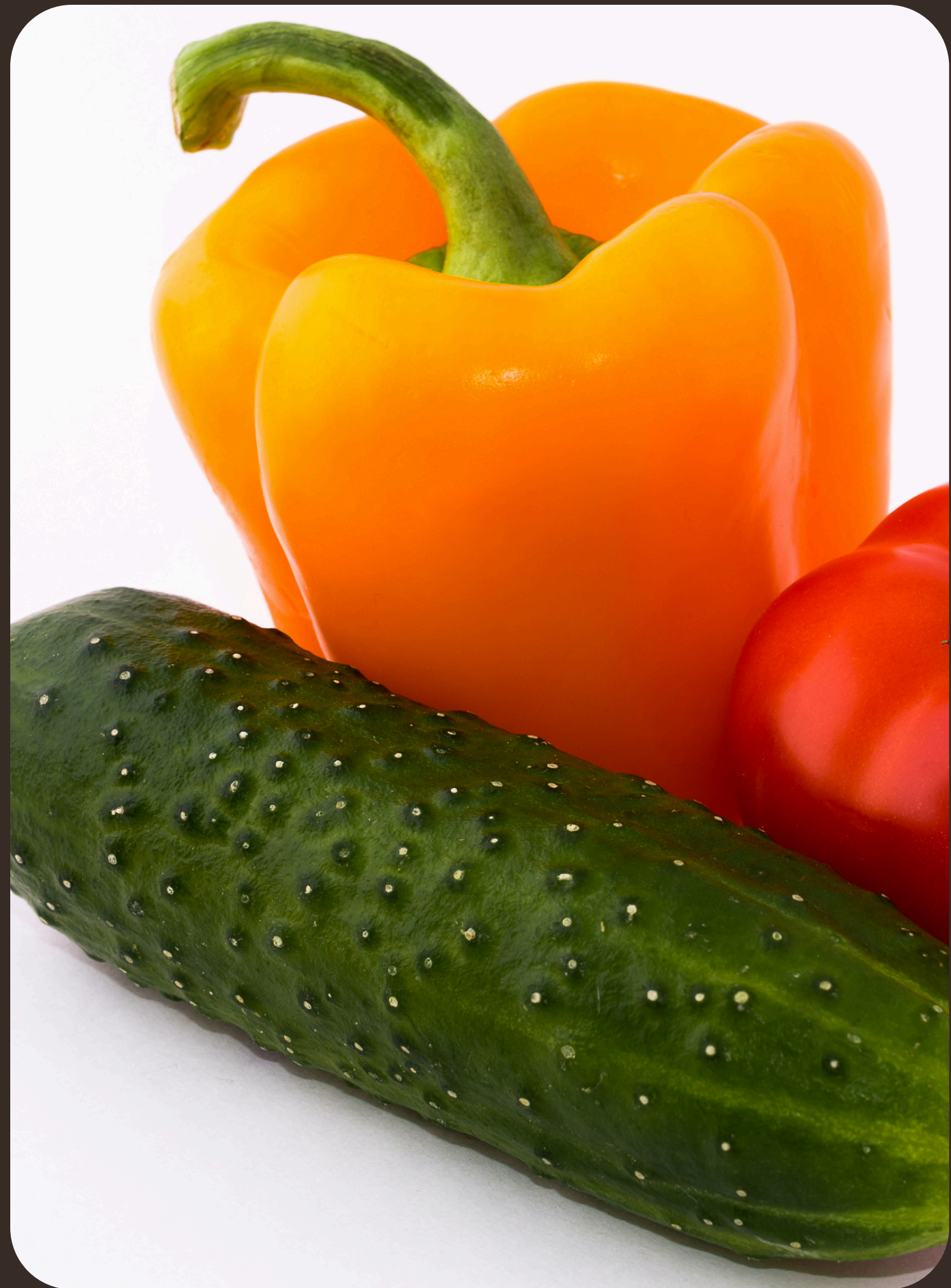
- 2 cups rock phosphate (phosphorus)
- 2 cups greensand (potassium)
- 1/2 cup bone meal (phosphorus, calcium)
- 1/4 cup kelp meal (micronutrients)

Why different:

- Heavy feeders need more nutrients
- Sustained nutrients through growing season

Best for: Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cucumbers, squash





Fruiting Vegetable Mix

Balanced Soil for Thriving Plants

This **nutrient-dense mix** combines coco coir, compost, and organic fertilizers to support **heavy feeders** like tomatoes and cucumbers, ensuring robust growth and abundant harvests in your balcony garden.

Container Trees and Shrubs

Stability for Long-Term Growth in Containers

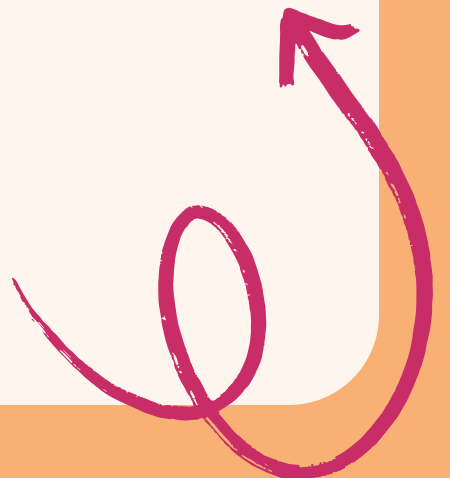
Ingredients:

- 3 parts compost
- 2.5 parts coarse sand (for weight and stability)
- 3 parts coco coir
- 2.5 parts composted pine bark (long-lasting structure)
- 3 parts perlite
- 2 tbsp lime (if needed)
- 1 cup organic fertilizer

Why different:

- Heavier mix provides stability for large plants
- Pine bark provides long-term structure
- More substantial for multi-year growth

Best for: Dwarf fruit trees in large containers, berry bushes





Container Trees and Shrubs

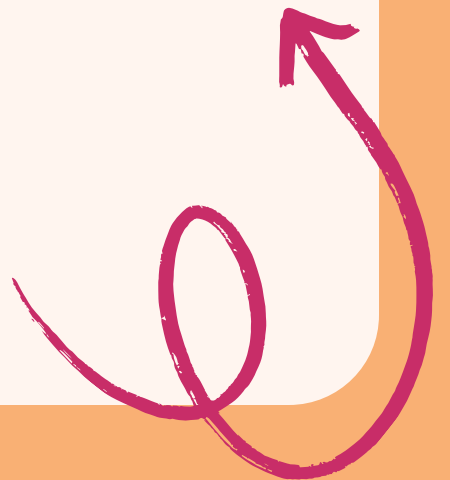
Ingredients and Mixing Tips for Success

A stable, nutrient-rich mix is essential for **container trees and shrubs**. Use compost, coarse sand, and perlite for a balanced blend that ensures stability and growth in larger pots.

Optimal Soil Preparation

Rehydrating, mixing, and testing soil

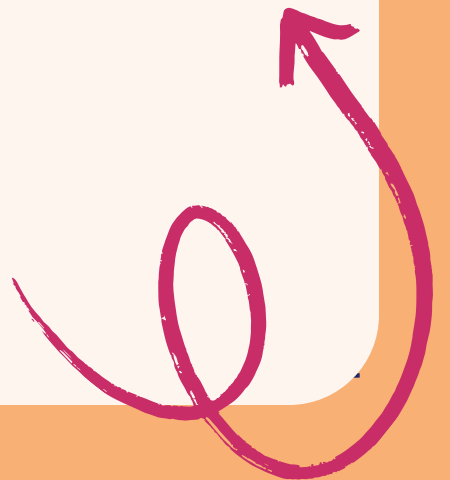
Properly **rehydrating coco coir** and other components is essential. Ensure even mixing, test moisture levels, and check pH to maintain ideal conditions for successful plant growth.



Container Considerations

Optimal depth and drainage guidelines

Choosing the right container depth and ensuring adequate **drainage is crucial** for healthy root growth. Additionally, consider the weight limits of your balcony to prevent structural issues.





Mix Your Way to a Greener Balcony

Start your soil recipes today for thriving plants



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