

# Soil structure scorecard

Score	Soil structure	Soil aggregates	Description	Management
<b>Score 1: GOOD</b> Crumbly (aggregates readily crumble with fingers).			Good soil structure, highly porous. Small, rounded, crumb-like aggregates (<6 mm). Numerous, well-distributed roots down to spade depth. Sweet, earthy smell.	No management changes needed, continue routine monitoring.
<b>Score 2: GOOD</b> Intact (aggregates easily break apart with one hand).			Good soil structure, mostly porous. Larger rounded aggregates (2 mm to 7 cm). Numerous, well-distributed roots down to spade depth. Sweet, earthy smell.	No management changes needed. Reassess annually on grassland. Continue rotational monitoring on arable land.
<b>Score 3: MODERATE</b> Firm (most aggregates break apart with one hand).			Adequate soil structure, less visible pores. Rounded aggregates, with some angular (2 mm to 10 cm). Fewer roots distributed within soil aggregates. No noticeable smell.	Minimise traffic on wet ground. Infrastructure changes in grassland can help, e.g. back-fencing, multiple field entrances or tracks. Consider cultivation depth on arable land in autumn.
<b>Score 4: POOR</b> Compact (effort needed to break apart aggregates with one hand).			Poor soil structure, very few pores. Mostly large angular aggregates (>10 cm). Reduced rooting, clustered in large pores, earthworm channels and cracks between aggregates. Red/orange mottling may be present (sign of poor drainage). May have 'bad egg' smell.	Minimise traffic on wet ground. Check subsoil layers for compaction. Consider targeted cultivations under the right soil conditions. On grassland, consider using a sward slitter or aerator (<10 cm depth) and a sward lifter/top-soiler (10 to 30 cm depth). If the sward is poor, consider ploughing or reseeding. On arable land, consider improved drainage and diversifying crop rotations, especially the inclusion of no-till periods (e.g. ley-arable rotations).
<b>Score 5: POOR</b> Very compact (aggregates difficult to break apart with two hands).			Poor soil structure, very few pores. Very large angular or platy aggregates (>10 cm). Few roots, if any, restricted to the surface, down large pores, following earthworm channels or cracks. May be grey/blue in colour, or with orange mottling (sign of poor drainage). Strong 'bad egg' smell.	Minimise traffic on wet ground. Check subsoil layers for compaction. Consider targeted cultivations under the right soil conditions. On grassland, consider using a sward slitter or aerator (<10 cm depth) and a sward lifter/top-soiler (10 to 30 cm depth). If the sward is poor, consider ploughing or reseeding. On arable land, consider improved drainage and diversifying crop rotations, especially the inclusion of no-till periods (e.g. ley-arable rotations).

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