

## Soil Blocks for Raising Seedlings (from Milkwood Permaculture)

Soil blocks are a great technique for getting a heap of seedlings started without pots. The basic concept is that you make blocks of soil with a mould and then plant seeds into the block, and raise the seed to seedling size. The blocks simply sit on a tray or piece of wood, each one is separated by a small air gap which stops the roots growing from one block into another.

When the seedlings are moved up into larger blocks or out into the garden the roots will move immediately into the new soil and the plant will keep growing without the usual ten day delay and associated stress caused by the transplant.



**The mix that Milkwood Permaculture currently uses to make soil blocks is as follows:**

- 2 parts Coco-peat (comes in a dried and pressed block)
- 1 part Course sand (washed)
- 1 part Compost
- 1 part Mushroom compost (or ordinary compost)
- 1 part Worm castings

Mix it all together and proceed to soil block. The exact consistency of the mix can be varied with a little water... experiment until you get it right.

If made correctly, the blocks don't fall apart. The secret is in the potting mix which needs to be quite fibrous and very wet when you make the blocks. Gentle watering with a fine rose will not affect the blocks at all.



## Seed Raising (Milkwood Permaculture style):

1. Line the base of a bread crate with geotextile mesh.
2. Make soil blocks, and place into the crate.



3. Plant seeds into the earth block pots. Seeds go into the depression on each soil block, then are covered over



4. Water daily (or as needed) with a gentle mister until seedlings are ready to plant out.

