Look closer!

The bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes in this game are real. Scan the code to look for them under Dr. Dirt's microscope: find them, count them and see how healthy a soil is.

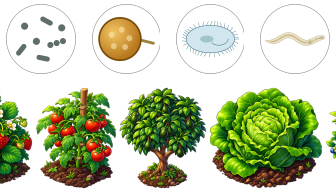
Scan with a phone or tablet camera



A BOARD GAME OF THE LIVING SOIL

Dr. Dirt's Living Soil





2 to 4 players · ages 6 and up
Play against each other or together

Market and Bushels

Land on a Market to sell all your READY plants. Take the Bushels shown on each card from the bank, then put the Seed card under the Seed deck. Make change with the bank.

Shed cards

Keep up to 3, face up. Got a 4th? Put one under the Shed deck.

When a Move card names a Shed card you have, you may use it. A **bad** card does nothing: stay where you are and keep your turn. A **good** card moves you 1 more. Then put your Shed card under the Shed deck.

The **Magnifying lens** lets you peek at the top Move card before you take it. Don't want it? Put it under the deck.

Some Move cards can't be stopped. Some harm can't be undone!

Your turn

1. COMPLETE A FARM ACTION: move a soil life token or randomly select a seed card.
2. GRAB A MOVE CARD and do what it asks.
3. READ and do what it says to do on your new space.
4. NEXT PLAYER'S TURN.

Farm action

Move one of your soil-life tokens up 1 (5 is the top), *or* take the top Seed card and put it in front of you with **SEED** at the top. You can grow 4 plants at a time.

Move cards

Ahead or **Back**: move that many spaces. **Go again**: take another turn. **Lose a turn**: skip your next turn. **Soil life down**: move those tokens down 1. Do your space only if you moved **ahead** onto it. Put used cards under the deck.

Why I made this game

Hi, I'm Dr. Dirt! Under every garden lives a crowd too small to see: bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes. They eat, they get eaten, and what they leave behind feeds the plants. That is the **soil food web**.

In this game you don't feed your plants. You feed the soil life, and the soil life feeds your plants.

Every choice has a cause and an effect. Mulch and cover crops keep the soil alive. Tilling breaks the fungi's threads. Quick fertilizer and sprays hurt the tiny helpers. Some harm can't be undone, so the best farmers protect their soil before trouble comes.

Play against each other, or play together and share your tools through droughts and pests, the way good neighbours do.

Then go outside and look closer at real soil. You'll know who lives there!



Dr. Dirt

Microscope cards

Root-eating nematode: Lose one plant, unless your Nematodes are 2 or more

Microfiber: −1 on any one track

Bacteria: +1 Bacteria

Fungi: +1 Fungi

Protozoa: +1 Protozoa

Nematodes: +1 Nematodes

Fungus lookalike, Disease fungus: −1 Fungi

Algae, Not soil life: Nothing happens

Winning

When someone finishes the last year (passes START), finish the round so everyone has the same number of turns. Sell all your READY plants. Get **3 more Bushels** if your farm has a **food web**: 2 or more on all four tracks. Most Bushels wins!

Playing together

Everyone's farms are one big farm. Put the marker on **Healthy**. Every Back, Lose a turn or Soil life down card moves it 1 toward **Farm lost**, unless anyone uses a Shed card to stop it. Give Shed cards to each other on your turn. No selling at the Market. Win together with **5** ready plants for 2 players, **7** for 3, **9** for 4, and one food web, before the farm is lost.

✂ cut across here

Set up

1. First time only: cut out the cards. Fold each Dr. Dirt pawn on the dashes so it stands up.
2. Shuffle the **Microscope**, **Move** and **Shed** decks and put them face down on their spots under the board.
3. Shuffle the **Seed** cards face down beside the board. The **Bushel** cards are the bank.
4. Each player takes a Dr. Dirt and the farm of the same colour. Put your pawn on **START** and your 4 soil-life tokens on **0**. (Beans or paperclips work too.)
5. Each player takes 3 Shed cards and keeps them face up.
6. Choose how many **years** to play. One year is one trip around the board. **1 year** is a short game; **2 years** is the full game.
7. The youngest player goes first. Then play goes to the left.

The spaces

START and Tend: move one soil-life token up 1.

Shed: take a Shed card.

Microscope: take a Microscope card, do what it says, put it under the deck.

Market: sell your READY plants.

Harvest: your plants grow. Passing it counts too!

Seeds and growing

Each Seed card shows what soil life it needs. At every Harvest you reach, turn each plant whose needs are met a quarter turn: **SEED** → **SPROUT** → **READY**. The word at the top is its stage.

Veggies	B2 F1	×2
Berries	F2	×3
Fruit trees	F3 N1	×5