Before digging, understand where your utilities are. Fill the hole with water and let it drain (This step is to saturate the soil). This may take a short period to one day.

Dig a hole in the garden one to two feet wide by one to two feet deep.

Fill the hole with water and let it drain (This step is to saturate the soil). This may take a short period to one day.

After the water drains the first time, refill the hole with water, and note how long it takes for the hole to empty.

Understanding Your Results:
- Ideally well-draining garden soil should drop 1-2 inches per hour.
- Drainage rates that are slower than the ideal reveal that the soil is too heavy with clay (or that other conditions might be a cause, like a layer of bedrock beneath).
- If your soil drains much quicker than the ideal rate (1-2 inches in 15 minutes or less, as opposed to an hour), it’s likely that your soil’s so porous because it contains too much sand.
- Again, both drainage problems – too slow or too fast – can be corrected by incorporating 2-4 inches of organic compost into the top 1 foot of soil.
- Adding sand may improve drainage in heavy, clay soils. However, more lasting and beneficial effects will be achieved by adding organic matter.