



3.4.5.1 Levels of classification in Soil Taxonomy, and characteristics used to separate each level. Bold, *italicized*, underlined, and colored text show how Soil Taxonomy communicates information about the higher levels of classification from Suborder through Family.

Level	Characteristics	Example
Order	genetic similarities (Base-rich, argillic horizon)	Alfisols
Suborder	moisture, temperature, decomposition, other factors (ustic moisture regime)	<i>Ustalfs</i>
Great Group	presence or absence of diagnostic horizons (Strongly developed argillic horizon)	<u>Paleustalfs</u>
Subgroup	central concept and variations on theme (Borderline aridic/ustic)	Aridic <u>Paleustalfs</u>
Family	management	Fine-loamy, mixed, superactive, thermic Aridic <u>Paleustalfs</u>
Series	profile characteristics	Amarillo

3.4.5.2 Recognizing classification levels - **Bold**, *italicized*, underlined, and **colored** text show how information about the higher levels of classification from Suborder through Family.

Level	Characteristics	Example
Order	words end in -sol (grassland soils)	Mollisols
Suborder	prefix + root (from order) (ustic moisture regime)	<i>Ust</i> +olls
Great Group	prefix + prefix + root (prefix + suborder) (Strong development, often in argillic horizon)	<u>Pale</u> <i>+ust</i> +olls
Subgroup	two (or three) words, -ic + great group (Borderline Aridic/ustic, vertic properties)	Torr-ert+ic <u>Paleustolls</u>
Family	texture, mineralogy, texture class, chemistry, depth, coatings, cracks, etc.	fine, mixed, superactive, thermic Torrertic <u>Paleustolls</u>
Series	geographic landmark (city, county, etc.)	Pullman

3.4.5.4.1 Key Sequence with Central Concept of the Soil Orders

Order	Root	Diagnostic Feature	Typical Profile Sequence	Common suffix symbols
1. Gelisols	<i>el</i>	permafrost &/or gelic materials	Several possible	f, ff, jj
2. Histosols	<i>ist</i>	histic	Oa, Oe, Oi	
3. Spodosols	<i>od</i>	spodic	A [†] - E - Bhs	
4. Andisols	<i>and</i>	andic materials (volcanic ejecta)	A [†] - B	
5. Oxisols	<i>ox</i>	oxic	A [†] - Bo	j, v
6. Vertisols	<i>ert</i>	slickensides	A [†] - Bss	
7. Aridisols	<i>id</i>	aridic regime or salic horizon	A [†] - B	k, m, n, w, y, z
8. Ultisols	<i>ult</i>	argillic/kandic, BCSP < 35%	A [†] - E - Bt	j, v, x
9. Mollisols	<i>oll</i>	mollic	A [†]	Bt, Bk, Bw
10. Alfisols	<i>alf</i>	argillic/kandic, BCSP > 35%	A [†] - Bt, A-E-Bt	k, n, x, y
 11. Inceptisols	<i>ept</i>	cambic	A [†] - Bw	
 12. Entisols	<i>ent</i>	no endopedon	A [†] - C, A - R	

†Epipedons can be anthropic (Ap) whether mollic, umbric, or ochric.