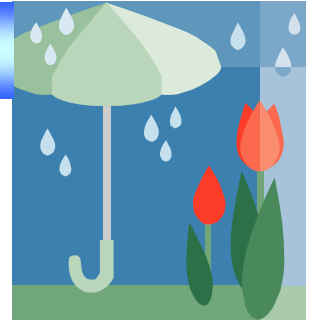


How To Create A Rain Barrel



Collecting the rain that rolls off your roof for use in the garden preserves natural resources and saves money on your water bill.

One affordable way to capture hundreds of gallons of rainwater every year is to make and install rain barrels from simple plumbing fixtures and recycled food grade containers.

Tools

- drill
- one inch spade bit
- tin snips or heavy-duty scissors for cutting screen
- hack saw for trimming downspout
- adjustable wrench with at least one inch capacity
- utility knife
- safety glasses

Tips

- Make sure your design keeps mosquitoes, pets, and children out of the water.
- The water from the rain barrel should never be used for drinking.
- Direct the overflow hose away from your foundation.
- Clean out the water and check the rain barrel for leaks at least once a year.
- During cold weather, you may want to drain the rain barrel and direct the water away from the house using a flexible downspout attachment.



Instructions

Depending on the type of barrel and location of your downspout, determine how you will route water from the downspout into the barrel. If your barrel does not have a screw-off lid, a plastic downspout adapter and flexible gutter attachment can be purchased to connect the downspout into the screw plug (or bung) on top of the barrel. Search the Internet for examples of different ways to outfit your particular rain barrel. These instructions are for use on an open top container with a removable lid and screw ring for closure.

Supplies

- √ one 50 to 55 gallon food grade plastic barrel
- √ two hose bibs with 3/4 inch threaded inlet and 3/4 inch male hose end
- √ two 3/4 inch galvanized locknuts to secure spigot from the inside of the barrel
- √ four, one inch (opening) washers to provide rigid surface for hose bib
- √ one, six foot or longer section of garden hose with female end
- √ Teflon tape
- √ silicon adhesive
- √ two 8"x 8" x 12" concrete or wooden blocks
- √ window screen netting (enough to cover the barrel top)
- √ downspout adapter
- √ square shoe (directs water to splash block), elbow or flexible gutter attachment (to route the downspout to the barrel)
- √ clincher strap (attaches downspout to house)
- √ small pieces of wood blocking to use behind clincher strap (if necessary)

Easy Step-by-Step Directions



1. Use a 1" spade bit to drill approximately 15 holes in a circular pattern into the top of the lid.



2. Cut the screen material to fit over the lid and then sandwich the screen netting between the lid and the barrel.



3. Straddle the barrel on its side so it cannot roll. Cut an opening for the overflow spigot by drilling a 1" hole into the side of the barrel, about 4" down from the top. Swivel the barrel approximately 3/4 turn. Drill another 1" hole for the water-dispensing spigot approximately 3" to 4" from the bottom of the barrel.



4. Wrap the threads of both hose bibs with Teflon tape, then wind ends into the holes, placing a washer between the spigot and the outside of the barrel. Reaching into the barrel spread a bead of silicon around each opening and secure the hose bibs with a washer, then a locknut. Gently tighten the locknuts to secure the hose bibs.



5. Level two concrete blocks underneath the downspout. Remove square shoe. Mark where to trim the downspout so it sits about 2" above the barrel. Trim downspout with hacksaw. Reattach square shoe to downspout and secure to house with clincher strap*.



6. Install rain barrel under downspout, making sure that the barrel is level and securely sitting on both blocks. Attach hose section to overflow spigot, turn to the on position, and direct hose end away from foundation.



7. After rainfall, fill watering can using the bottom spigot. Water plants at will and enjoy the free water!

* Use the small blocks of wood to support the downspout if it sits away from the wall.



Low Area On Your Lawn?

A growing solution across the nation is to plant a Rain Garden which will absorb excess moisture in these low areas. It's a great use for the water you capture in your Rain Barrel.

Learn more by [clicking here](http://www.raingardennetwork.com) to check out this website, or copy an paste <http://www.raingardennetwork.com> to your web browser. There are hundreds of sites just like it.

Other Systems

Since today's natural resources have become precious, more and more people have become aware of the environment. Stores have started to carry items just for the purpose being described here. If making your own "rain barrel" is an obstacle, you might want to consider some ready made alternatives available in home improvement departments of local stores. See below for some examples:

