

Rain Barrel 101

Why have a rain barrel?

A rain barrel is an easy and affordable way to collect rain water. By collecting rain water, homeowners conserve water, save money on their water bills, and help control drainage issues on residential properties. They also help to reduce flooding and pollution. When rainwater runs off hard surfaces like rooftops, roadways, parking lots, and compacted lawns it can carry with it pollutants, which flow ultimately into our rivers and lakes.

What can I do with a rain barrel?

Hook the barrel spigot up to a hose or fill a watering can and use it to water your plants. Best of all: free refills!

DON'T drink, cook or bathe with the rain barrel water.

WHAT YOU NEED

MATERIALS:

200 Litre Barrel

4 Litre Tapered Bucket

Mesh Screening - (Home Hardware # 2387321)

Threaded Spigot - (Home Hardware # 5093721)

Overflow Mechanism (+ optional O-ring)

- Overflow P1 (Home Hardware # 3254016)

- Overflow P2 (Home Hardware # 3252214)

- Overflow P3 (Home Hardware # 3253311)

- O-ring (Home Hardware # 3254178)

Downspout Connectors

Downspout diverter kit OR Flexible Downspout

Concrete blocks

(Exterior Latex Paint & Exterior Latex Primer)

Sump Pump Tubing (1 ½")

TOOLS:

Drill

Drill Bit ¾"

Drill Bit 1-7/8"

Jigsaw

Scissors

Eye Protection

Marker Pen

PREPARATION

1. Thoroughly clean and dry your barrel inside and out.
2. With the marker pen, trace a circle around the bucket on the top of the barrel.
3. Drill a starter hole on the inside of the marked circle.
4. Cut along the inside of the marked circle.



5. Drill a hole using the ¾" bit approximately 15 cm up from the base of the barrel for the spigot.
6. Using the 1-½" bit, drill a second hole above the first approximately 15 cm down from the top of the barrel. This will become your overflow.



7. Drill a hole in the bottom of the bucket using the 1-7/8" bit.
8. Cut a circle of mesh to fit inside the bucket with the scissors.
9. (Prime the barrel ready for painting!)

BUILD THE BARREL

1. (Paint the barrel as desired!)
2. Remove the washer and O-ring from the spigot.
3. Screw the spigot into the bottom hole. This will take some force to get the threads to bite but will ultimately create a watertight seal.
4. Fix the O-ring and washer back onto the spigot from the inside of the rain barrel to secure the spigot in place.
5. Lay out all parts of your overflow mechanism. P1 will unscrew into 2 pieces.



6. Place O-ring onto P1.1
7. Insert P1.1 through the top hole of the barrel.
8. Screw P1.2 onto P1.1 from the outside of the barrel.
9. Place the stopper (P2) and screw in closing cap (P3) to close the overflow.
10. Gently push the bucket into the top of the barrel.
11. Place the mesh screen into the bucket and over the hole.

Inside barrel *Outside barrel*



INSTALLATION

1. When positioning your barrel, it is important that the barrel be placed on a flat, stable, elevated platform. This makes it easier to fill your watering can or attach a hose.
2. Remove a section of, or cut the downspout to the desired height.
3. Attach an elbow or flexible downspout piece to direct water into the intake bucket OR replace a section of downspout with a diverter kit (available at hardware stores).
4. Place a few rocks on top of the screen to hold it in place and keep mosquitoes out.
5. Divert the overflow outlet hose 2 or more metres away from your home's foundation, and into an area that can use the extra water. Leave the overflow cap in place if no hose is used to allow water to flow out and prevent mosquitos getting in.
6. If the barrel has removable lid, be sure to securely fasten it back on with a nut and bolt or mini padlock.



Caring for your barrel

Throughout the summer, make sure the screen is clear of debris to ensure water is not collecting above the screen, as this will attract mosquitoes.

Sediments can still get into the barrel and settle to the bottom, so it is important to clean it out from time to time.

The freeze and thaw of water can damage or break your rain barrel. In the fall, **drain, disconnect** and **flip** your barrel upside down. Return the downspout to its original configuration.