

Supplies for a Rain Barrel

Rain barrels are an excellent way to gather and redirect water that would otherwise simply sink into the ground. With increasingly hot, dry summers in the RDOS, having a bit of extra water for a thirsty lawn or flower garden can make a big difference.

How much water can you collect? A house with a 1500 square foot roof can collect over 500 litres of water in a single 5mm rain event!

Required Supplies



One very large container. 55 gallon (220L) drums are a common size for rain barrels.

Drill two $\frac{3}{4}$ " holes in the drum. The first hole should be 2-3" from the bottom of the container. The second hole should be ~2" from the top.



One 3/4" sillcock hose spigot
AND
One 3/4" x 3/4" garden hose fitting



One 3/4" x 1/2" PVC bushing
AND
One 1/2" PVC MPT adapter



Approximately 5-6' of elastic rope or bungee cord



One 30"x30" piece of fibreglass screening

Optional:

Section of hose to attach to the overflow port to divert potential overflow

Silicone sealant, caulking, or similar waterproof product (to seal spigot and overflow connections)

Building Your Rain Barrel

Rain barrels are an excellent way to gather and redirect water that would otherwise sink into the ground. With increasingly hot, dry summers, having a bit of extra water for a thirsty lawn or flower garden can make a big difference.

How much water can you collect? A house with a 1500 square foot roof could fill a rain barrel in a single 5mm rain event!

Your rain barrel kit includes:



55-gallon (220L) plastic barrel with pre-drilled holes



Spigot to install at the bottom



Overflow port to install at the top



Screening to cover the top



Stretchy cord to secure the screen

Optional supplies (not needed, but recommended):

Silicone sealant, caulking, or similar product to seal spigot and overflow port connections

Small section of hose to attach to the overflow port to divert potential run-off

Assembling your Rain Barrel

Step 1: Decide Where to Put Your Rain Barrel

A rain barrel collects rainwater running off your home's gutters, so you should set it up at the downspout that gets the highest water flow during rain events.

Before building your rain barrel, you may wish to construct a stand for it, or buy a pre-made one. While it is fine to leave the barrel on the ground, raising it a few feet makes it far easier to put a watering can or bucket under the spigot. Wooden pallets, landscape pavers, and cinderblocks are commonly used as barrel stands.

NOTE: Anything you use as a stand needs to be level and very strong and sturdy - a full rain barrel can 400 pounds (180 kg)!

Step 2: Install the Spigot and Overflow Port

The spigot is installed at the bottom to release water into whatever method you are using to transport water, e.g. a hose, watering can, bucket, etc. Insert the spigot in pre-drilled hole and secure on the inside with threaded brass adapter. If you are using a sealant, seal the joint now.

The overflow port allows water to escape if your rain barrel gets too full. Install the port using the same method as the spigot. Ensure the threaded nut is on the outside of the barrel to connect the (optional) diversion hose.



Step 3: Add the Debris/Mosquito Screen

Installing window screen stops debris from getting into your barrel and prevents mosquitoes from laying eggs in the water. Lay the pre-cut section of screening across the top of the barrel and stretch the cord around the top lip of the barrel to secure it. Tie the cord tightly to ensure the screening doesn't shift.

Seasonal Maintenance:

- Scrub the barrel occasionally with a coarse deck brush. This will help prevent any odor/algae issues that may arise from the stagnant water.
- Water should be drained from the barrel prior to winter freeze to prevent damage

Can I Use a Rain Barrel Without a Gutter?

If your home does not have a gutter system, you can still use the barrel to collect water falling from your roof. Location is key if you want to make a rain barrel without a gutter. During rainy weather, walk around your home and locate the areas where the most water flows from the roof. Placing one or more barrels, in these places will let you collect as much water as possible.