

Rain Barrel To-Dos & Tips

Find the right spot.

The ideal spot for your rain barrel will be flat (or flattened) and under a downspout or an eave with a lot of water runoff.

Find a platform for that spot.

You will need to raise your rain barrel off the ground so that you can put a bucket/ pitcher underneath the spigot and have enough room to easily connect the spigot to a hose. Many people choose cinder blocks for this, but there are many alternatives (treated wood platform, decorative blocks/bricks, etc.)

Place your Rain Barrel on your platform and BE CERTAIN it is level and balanced.

55 gallons of water weighs A LOT and can easily tip over if not positioned securely.

Position the inlet hole on the top of your Rain Barrel to where you think it will receive most of the water from the downspout or eave. You may want to put on a rain jacket to do this when it actually rains! If you're going to take advantage of a downspout, you will need to cut it at the right level and reposition the elbow from the bottom of the downspout to where it was cut. Aim the repositioned elbow to where the water will pour into the rain barrel opening.

Watch the Rain fall and fill your Barrel!

Your rain barrel will fill up quickly with a good downpour!

All of the rain barrels that have been provided come with a downspout adapter in their tops. It's important that you **NOT** directly attach your downspout to this **UNLESS** you create an overflow valve (to be addressed in class) or are willing to purchase and install an extra device called a rain barrel diverter. If you attach the downspout directly to the barrel without using a diverter or overflow valve, water will likely build up in your downspout and put a burden on your gutters they're not made to handle. Many rain barrel diverters can be found on the internet (the one made by Oatey seems to be economical and the *easiest to install*).

TAKE HOME TIPS

- It's a good idea to add some type of screen or netting under the downspout adapter to keep debris and mosquitoes out of your rain barrel.
- Rain barrels may need to be cleaned seasonally. To reduce the amount of debris collected in your rain barrel, you may choose to install a filter (metal sock found at hardware stores near gutters) in the downspout where it attaches to the gutter.
- For a more inconspicuous look, many hardware stores carry many colors of spray paint that are designed to adhere to plastic. You may choose to set a small fence or trellis with a climbing vine in front of your barrel – you can get creative! Just remember to keep the barrel easily accessible!

We hope you enjoy your rain barrel!

More information:

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