

Why Should I Have a Rain Barrel?

Rain barrels are an effective and easy means of conserving water. Instead of losing the water that falls on your roof to street runoff and drainage, why not collect that water and put it to good use? The barrel is a water reservoir designed to make rainwater available for you to use in your gardens and flowerbeds. In addition, a rain barrel reduces the amount of rain flow that can overwhelm storm drainage systems causing erosion as well as decreases the pollution of our streams and rivers.

What Do I Need?

Materials:

- One 55 gallon drum
- One atrium grate (4" recommended)
- One 1/2" PVC male adapter
- One 3/4" x 1/2" PVC male adapter
- One 5' section clear vinyl hose (3/4" OD x 5/8" ID)
- One 5' section drain hose/line (1 1/4")
- One 1 1/4" female barbed fitting
- One 1 1/4" male threaded coupling
- One 1 1/2" pipe bracket
- One 3/4"-1 3/4" hose clamp
- One vinyl gutter elbow
- Waterproof sealant (silicone caulking)
- Screen material or mosquito netting
- Cinderblocks/Strong Crate

Tools:

- Drill
 - 3/4" bit
- Hole Saw
 - 1 5/8" bit
- Measuring Tape

Using the Rain Barrel

When the vinyl hose is placed in the pipe bracket the water level visible in the hose is the water level in the barrel. A regular garden hose can be attached to the 3/4" x 1/2" PVC male adapter at the end of the clear vinyl hose. By lowering the hose below the water level water will flow out of the hose. Be sure to clean out the atrium grate occasionally to ensure debris does not block water from entering the barrel. Enjoy!

Winterize Your Rain Barrel

Empty the water from your rain barrel and disconnect the downspout prior to the winter season.

Did You Know?

The average home roof is approximately 1200 sq. ft. with four downspouts (each covering about 300 sq. ft.) and is capable of filling a rain barrel with only 0.3" of rain!

Contact Information

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City of Omaha
Environmental Quality Control

*Build Your
Own Rain
Barrel*

Do Your Part for Water Conservation.



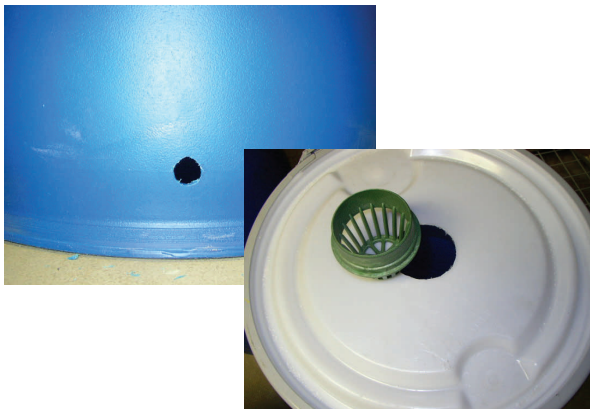
NOTE: Before you start, know where you want the barrel to be located and plan out where you will want the hose to be accessible and overflow drainage to run.

1 Getting Started

Cut lower drain hole: Measure 1" up from bottom of the barrel and drill a hole with $\frac{3}{4}$ " bit through the barrel.

Cut upper drain hole: Measure about 3 to 4" from bottom of lid and cut with $1\frac{5}{8}$ " hole saw.

Cut top hole for atrium grate: Mark a circle around the base of the atrium grate on the barrel lid. Drill a $\frac{3}{4}$ " hole inside the circle and cut out the rest of the circle. The atrium grate should fit securely in the hole with the basket facing down.



2 Assemble Parts

Attach vinyl hose to lower drain hole: Screw in the $\frac{1}{2}$ " PVC male adapter to the lower drain hole. This should cut threads into the barrel's soft plastic. Unscrew the same $\frac{1}{2}$ " PVC male adapter and wrap with Teflon tape. You can also coat the threads with waterproof sealant for added seal. Screw the coated adapter back into the hole. Attach 5' clear vinyl hose to the PVC male adapter just inserted. Attach the $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " PVC male adapter to the other end of the hose. Finally, screw the pipe bracket approximately 2" from the lower lip of the lid at an angle so that the vinyl hose can be easily inserted and removed from the bracket.

Attach drain hose to upper drain hole: Screw the $1\frac{1}{4}$ " male threaded coupling into the barrel. Unscrew the coupling and apply Teflon tape and/or silicone sealant to the threads. Screw the coated $1\frac{1}{4}$ " coupling back into the barrel and let dry. Attach 5' section of drain hose to the coupling and put hose clamp over the connection between the coupling and hose.

Place atrium grate and screen in lid: Secure screen/mosquito netting material to either the inside or outside of the atrium grate. Place the atrium grate into the hole (basket down).



3 Ready For Use

Modify/position the downspout: Cut the existing downspout so the 3' vinyl downspout can be placed over the top of the grate on the barrel.

Set up barrel: Place the barrel underneath a downspout on top of cinderblocks or sturdy wooden crate so that water will flow out of the hose when it is below the water level of the barrel.



Build Your Own Rain Barrel.