

How To Make A Rain Barrel



List of Materials

Generally all but the barrel can be purchased at ACE Hardware, Lowe's, or Home Depot.

The Barrel

You'll need:



- § **Food Grade Barrel** (Food grade barrels/drums are safe for use as rain barrels. It is not safe to recycle barrels that once held chemicals or other non-food products to collect water. Open it and peek/smell before you accept it, because some foods are nasty to clean up. You may be able to find these for free or very cheap if you are willing to look around—try local bottling companies, restaurant supply companies, bakeries, and ice cream shops, for instance. You can always paint a plastic barrel if you don't like how it looks.)

The Spigot & Hardware



You'll need:

- § **¾" hose bib spigot** (½" will work too but with smaller locknut and washer). These have male threads at one end to screw into the barrel and at the other to attach a standard size hose.
- § **¾" galvanized locknut**
- § **Rubber washer with a 1" inner diameter**
- § **Teflon tape**
- § **Superglue**
- § **Silicone caulk**

The Overflow Valve & Hardware

You'll need:



- § **¾" brass overflow valve** (Like the spigot, has male threads on either end with the outer end able to connect with the female end of a hose--plastic will work too. These are called "male hose MIP adapter ¾ x ¾ x ½" at Lowe's and #A-665 at Home Depot.)
- § **Locknut**
- § **Rubber washer**
- § **Teflon tape**
- § **Silicon caulk**

Tools

You'll need:



- § Drill
- § 1" hole saw or drill bit
- § Utility knife
- § Needle nose pliers or wrench
- § Screw driver and ½ dozen screws
- § Screen for top filter

Making Your Own Rain Barrel

1. Wash and rinse your food grade barrel with mild soap and water.
2. Cut a hole in the top of the barrel approximately 8"x8". This is where water will enter the rain barrel and how you will access the inside of the barrel during assembly.
3. Drill a 1" hole approximately 2" from the bottom of the container for the spigot assembly.
4. Drill a 1" hole approximately 3" below the top of the barrel for your overflow valve assembly. Keep in mind: don't put it too close to the top (overflow) or too low (lose water storage). Please note: if your roof is 2,000+ square feet you may want to use a larger overflow valve.
5. Wrap the barrel end of the spigot with Teflon tape and then screw the spigot squarely into the lower hole. It should go by hand.
6. Place a rubber washer around the end of the spigot on the inside of the barrel. Screw on and tighten the lock nut while holding the spigot firmly in place.
7. Wrap the longer end of the overflow valve with Teflon tape and then screw it into the overflow hole. Place a rubber washer and locknut around the end of the valve inside the barrel, tighten firmly. The outside male threads should be able to connect with a standard size hose to divert the overflow.
8. Apply a bead of silicone caulk around the seal where the spigot meets the barrel and where the overflow valve meets the barrel.
9. Cut a piece of screen approximately one inch wider on all sides than the inlet hole in the top of the barrel (10"x10"). Fasten the screen to the barrel lid with small screws. This screen will prevent debris and mosquitoes from entering the barrel.
10. Place the rain barrel on leveled concrete blocks next to your house's downspout. Place the blocks at a height that allows you to fit a watering can or bucket beneath the spigot.
11. Cut your house's downspout at barrel height and position it over the inlet hole to allow water to flow into the barrel as it drains from the gutters.