

Build your own rain barrel



Getting Started

Generally, a rain barrel consists of three main components: a barrel, a top hole, an upper drain, and a lower drain.

- **Plastic 55-gallon drums** are the recommended type of barrel to use for safely collecting water with minimal leaking.
- A **top hole** should be cut in the top of the barrel for collecting water. Insert a skimmer basket like those found in garden ponds and swimming pools to filter out leaves and other debris. It is important to cover the basket with fiberglass window screen to prevent mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects from entering the barrel.
- The **top drain** is a plastic faucet that should always be left in the "open" position to keep the barrel from overflowing.
- The **bottom drain** is a plastic faucet that attaches to a hose for watering lawns and gardens. This faucet should be kept in the "closed" position when not in use.

Tools

- 7/8" spade drill bit
- Electric jigsaw
- Electric drill
- Utility knife
- Marker

Supplies

- 1 - 55-gallon plastic barrel
- 2 - 3/4" plastic faucets
- 1 - 3/4" female coupling
- 1 - Skimmer basket
- 1 - Roll of teflon tape
- 1 - All purpose caulk or plumbing sealant
- 1 - 5-ft. section of garden hose
- 4 - Hose couplers
- 1 - 12" x 12" piece of fiberglass window screen

Top Hole

- Use basket to trace template on barrel
- Pre-drill small hole using 1" spade bit
- Make sure to drill inside the line
- Use a jigsaw to cut out hole following the inside line

Upper Drain

- Mark holes at least two inches from top of barrel
- Use 1" drill bit to drill hole
- Screw plastic faucet into hole
- Use utility knife as needed to alter hole
- Wrap 3/4" coupling threads in Teflon tape and caulk and screw onto faucet inside the barrel

Bottom Drain

- Mark holes at least two inches from bottom of barrel
- Use 1" drill bit to drill hole
- Screw plastic faucet into hole. Use utility knife, as needed, to increase hole size
- Remove faucet, wrap threads in tape, caulk threads, replace faucet
- Caulk area where faucet and barrel meet to reduce leakage

Attaching Hoses

- Cut 2' section of hose
- Push each end of hose into a hose coupler and tighten screws
- Screw 3' section onto top outflow faucet and 2" section to bottom faucet

Final Steps

- Build a base to elevate the rain barrel
- Adjust downspout to flow into rain barrel
- Always keep overflow valve open