

Installing Your Rain Barrel

Required tools: Hacksaw, tape measure, goggles, gloves, pen or pencil

Recommended materials: 7'-10' garden hose, concrete blocks and/or pressure treated wood

1. Place the Barrel

Rain barrels need to be located near a downspout and on level, pervious (water-absorbing - not paved) ground. Your rain barrel will overflow during heavy rain. Be sure you can direct overflow to pervious ground and away from your (and your neighbor's) home.

Placing your rain barrel on a stable platform will help increase water pressure and make it easier to use a watering can or bucket. Concrete blocks or pressure-treated wood work well for platforms. A full rain barrel weighs approximately 500 pounds, so make sure the platform is sturdy!

If you have a favorite watering can, adjust your platform to make sure it will fit comfortably under the spigot.

2. Measure and Cut

Once your rain barrel is in place, position the flexible elbow (included with your rain barrel) on the barrel and next to the downspout to determine where to cut. The elbow should be aimed at the screened opening on the top of the rain barrel, and the downspout must be inserted about 2" into the elbow. For most installations, it works well to cut the downspout about 8" above the top of the barrel. Keep in mind that the downspout will need to be inserted a couple inches into the connecting elbow. Mark the downspout with a pen or pencil where you will be cutting it.

Once you are sure where to cut, put on your safety goggles and gloves and cut the downspout with a hacksaw.

3. Connect

Connect the flexible elbow to the cut downspout by inserting the downspout into the elbow and positioning it so water will flow into your rain barrel. Connect a garden hose to the overflow fitting and direct it away from your house. Depending on the location of your rain barrel and your yard, this hose may need to be at least 7'-10' long.

Cap off the old downspout location on the ground to prevent it from becoming an animal's nest or clogged with debris.

