



Building a Rain Barrel

- as easy as 1, 2, 3! -

These instructions offer a low cost, simple method for collecting rain water. You can use your choice of materials to make a unique rain barrel suited to your home.

Materials:

- 55 gal Food grade barrel
- 1 1/2" & 3/4" Bulkhead Fittings
- 3/4" Ball Valve Faucet
- Teflon tape
- 1 1/2" Overflow Adapter
- 1 1/2" Hose (at least 6')
- 1/8" screen(8" x 8") & 2-6" flower pots
- Downspout Connector and Screws

Tools:

- Drill
- 5 1/2" Hole Saw (or jig saw)
- 1 3/16" Drill Bit
- 1 1/2" Hole Saw
- Rasp or round file
- Rubber mallet
- Flat Head Screw Driver



1. Clean the barrel. Use 1/4 cup of vinegar and rinse your rain barrel out thoroughly to remove previous contents. Do not use bleach as it is harmful to the environment and storm drains.

2. Use a 5 1/2" hole saw or a jigsaw to cut a hole in the top of your barrel for the downspout inlet.

3. Drill an 1 1/2" hole at least 4" from the base of the barrel, for the bulkhead fitting and faucet.

4. Drill a 3" hole, 6" from the top of the barrel, 90 degrees from the faucet for the over flow.



1. Insert the 3/4" male bulkhead fitting through the corresponding hole from the inside, thread and tightly secure the female fitting from the exterior. Use a long stick (ie. hockey stick) wrapped with tape, sticky side out, to hold the male bulkhead fitting inside the barrel.

2. Wrap faucet threads tightly with teflon tape and twist in the treaded faucet into the bulkhead fitting.

3. Insert the 1 1/2" male bulkhead fitting through the corresponding hole from the inside, thread and tightly secure the female fitting from the exterior.

Instructions provided in partnership between Element Eco-Design and the RDNO
For more information contact the Regional District of North Okanagan-Greater Vernon Water at
250-550-3700 or visit www.rdno.ca/water.

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1. Place the rain barrel on the prepared site.
2. Attach a hose to the overflow to direct water away from your home. Insert flower pot into the 5 1/2" hole in the top. Set an 8"x 8" screen into place and place 2nd flower pot inside.
3. Cut the downspout 14" above the top of the rain barrel, secure a flexible downspout attachment and make minor adjustments as necessary. Check to ensure that all fittings are secure.

Where to put your Barrel:

- Choose a location close to a downspout
- Clear an area the size of the barrel you plan to install and level the ground
- Create an elevated structure to create more water pressure, ensuring the structure can safely hold the 200 pound weight of a full barrel. Two cinder blocks are strong enough.

Rain Barrel Tips:

- Do not use rain barrels for drinking water
- Ensure the barrel is made from food grade materials. Used barrels are an in-expensive and environmentally-friendly choice.
- Screen or close any openings to keep out pests and mosquitoes
- Before the temperature drops below freezing disconnect and empty the rain barrel, leaving the faucet open, to prevent ice damage.

Multiple barrels make sense:

Most rain barrels hold about 217 litres (about 55 US gallons) while a 2000 sqft roof can collect over 800 litres of rain during a heavy rainfall. On average in Vernon, over 5200 litres could be collected during the month of July. Residential outdoor water use in July is about 580 litres per day which adds up to a whopping 17,409 litres a month - rain could cover 30% of that water use!

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