

## Tips for Painting

1. Clean the barrel with warm soapy water and baking soda.
2. Use fine grit sandpaper on the outside surface. This helps the paint stick, but also smooths out any shallow cuts that may be on the barrel.
3. Outdoor paint works best but we recommend paints designed to cover plastic.
4. If you are going to use acrylics, apply a coat of bonding primer next.
5. Paint until you are happy.
6. Allow enough time for your barrel to dry completely.
7. A clear coat seal is recommended to protect your artwork.

Note: Using artist's oils is *not* recommended as they do not dry completely and can not be sealed like acrylics.



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## Installation

### Supplies Required

One 15' section of garden hose

One flexible downspout diverter

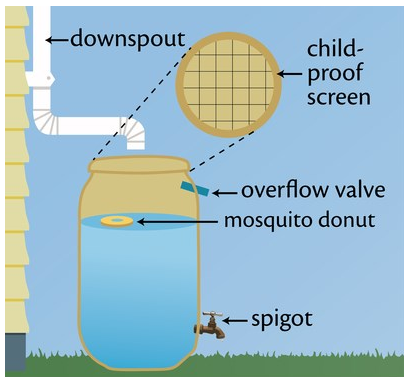
Cinder blocks or short pieces of 4x4 lumber

\*most supplies are available from a local hardware store

1. Select location to install your rain barrel near a gutter downspout from your house, garage, or shed.
2. Set blocks or lumber securely. Elevating your rain barrel increases water pressure and gives easier access to spigot.
3. Cut your downspout with a hacksaw approximately 8-12" above the top of the barrel. Tip: save the cut section to reinstall during the winter months.
4. Use the flexible downspout diverter to divert the downspout into the opening on the top of the barrel.
5. Secure the 15' hose to the upper hose adaptor. This acts as the overflow

allowing you to divert the excess water away from the house.

6. Secure a garden or soaker hose to the lower spigot, if desired.



## Care

Remove leaves and other debris from the screen where water enters the barrel once a week or after it rains. Keep on top of cleaning gutters.

Periodically check to make sure mosquitoes cannot get into the barrel.

Algae growth is uncommon, but can happen if the water sits too long. Sunlight increases the chance of algae growth, so light-colored barrels and sunny locations make algae more likely. If you notice algae growth inside the barrel, drain it and scrub it with a weak bleach-water solution.

## Winterization

1. Drain your rain barrel completely once the growing season has ended. Run the discharge hose over to an established tree or use the remaining water on other nearby vegetation. Plants need moisture throughout the winter, so water away.
2. Clear away any debris whether it is on the top of the barrel, inside its strainer basket or in the down spout itself. Now is a good time to trim back vegetation or tree branches that may have grown around the area.
3. Remove the drainage and over flow hoses and store them in a safe and protected area. Keeping garden hoses out of the elements will prevent them from prematurely cracking or hardening.
4. Open the spigot located at the bottom of the rain barrel and leave it open until spring arrives. This will allow any water that may accumulate in the barrel to flow freely out and onto the ground.
5. Once the hoses have been removed and the bottom spigot has been opened, it is typically safe to leave the rain barrel in place over the winter. Ideally any melting snow or winter rain will flow through the barrel and out the spigot without doing damage to the barrel itself.
6. If the empty rain barrel is removed and stored indoors for the winter, it is imperative to extend the existing downspout down and away from the home's foundation. An easy way to do this is to purchase a flexible downspout extension and attach it to the existing downspout using short, self-drilling sheet metal screws. Downspouts and extensions should always be secured into place using sheet metal screws to prevent them from slipping loose. Improperly drained gutters are the number one cause of damage to home foundations.
7. When spring draws near and the threat of one more deep winter freeze has passed, close the rain barrel's spigot, reattach the overflow and drainage hoses and start using your virtually free water supply once again.



Image Source: Garden Watersaver