

Rain barrels capture water from a roof and hold it for later use. Collecting roof runoff in rain barrels is helpful in conserving water and reducing your water bill by providing free water for use in your landscape. Rain barrels also help local streams by minimizing the amount of water that flows from your property during a large rain event.

BUILDING YOUR BARREL

Your rain barrel kit includes everything except for the drill to convert your drum into a usable rain barrel. There are three hole saw sizes that are used for installation. The small hole saw is used for the spigot and drain holes on the bottom. The medium hole saw is needed for the flexible hose used to link to the downspout. The large hole saw is used for the downspout. Make sure to place the rubber grommets in the drilled holds for a water-tight seal and easy installation.

INSTALLING YOUR BARREL

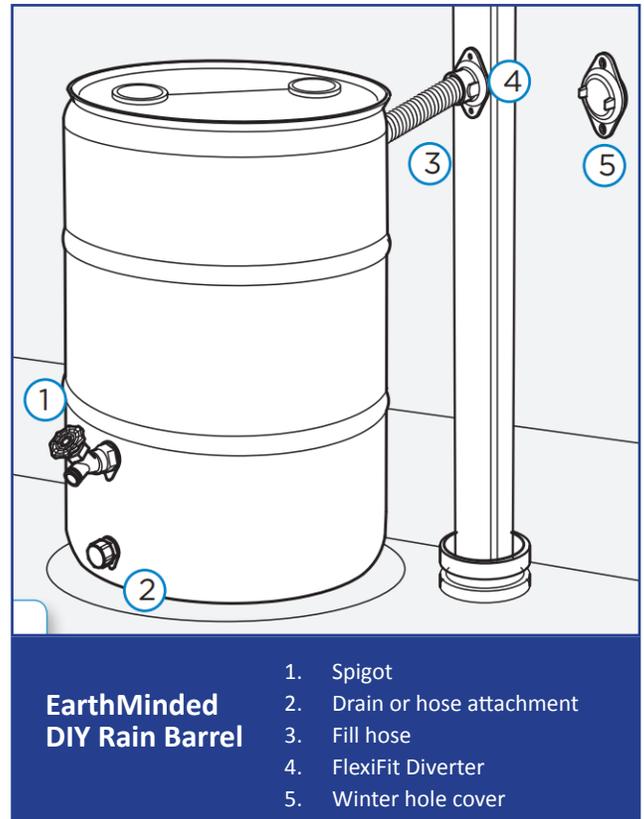
Choose the best location for easy access. Elevation is key for the gravity based system. Use cinder blocks or other type of platform to raise your barrel off the ground. Check and make sure your gutters are free from debris before installation. Use the EarthMinded DIY Rain Barrel Diverter User Guide for installation. Remember, the flexible hose needs to be completely level upon final installation.

RAIN BARREL CARE

With a closed barrel system you should not have any problems with mosquitoes. In the winter you will need to disconnect the barrel and empty the water. Then you can plug the hole in the downspout with the winter hole cover and secure with 2 screws. To change the look and color of your barrel you can use plastic spray paint. Sand, clean and use a base coat before painting.

USES FOR COLLECTED RAIN WATER

When rain water fills your barrel be sure to use as much stored water as often as possible to make room for new rain water. Keep in mind that as rain water flows over a roof surface it can pick up pollutants such as bacteria from birds and other animals and chemicals from roof materials. These are factors to consider when thinking about using rain barrel water on edible plantings. Empty water from the barrel using the spigot or bottom drain to water your garden, water house plants, wet down compost piles, wash mud off boots and tools, wash car, or to use as emergency water for flushing toilets.



For more information about rain barrels or other backyard conservation practices, please contact Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District at 513-695-1337 or visit warrenswcd.com