

## Plastic Rain Barrel Installation Instructions

The spigot will be installed in the PVC fitting that is near the bottom of the barrel (**finger tight only, do not use a wrench or pliers**). Elevate the rain barrel on a platform to create more water pressure and for easy use with a watering can. **If you connect a hose to the spigot, make sure you do not pull on the hose so hard that you pull the spigot out of the barrel.** Attach the female end of a garden hose to one of the pre-installed top white nylon hose connections to divert overflow water to a remote area. The other top fitting with the cap installed may be used to connect one or more additional rain barrels, or may be used for a second overflow hose.

If a flex elbow is installed for the rain barrel, cut out a 12" section of the down spout beginning about 12" above the top of the rain barrel. Leave the bottom part of the downspout connected to the house. If you install the rain barrel in this manner, when you remove your rain barrel during the winter months you can insert the bottom of the flex elbow back into the bottom section of the down spout.

**Be sure to drain your rain barrel during cold weather to prevent freezing!**

### **To change the color of the barrels**

Barrels can be painted with Krylon spray paint for plastic. This paint can be purchased from a hardware store for approximately \$3.75 per can. If applied correctly, one can of spray paint will be enough to paint a barrel.

### **Hose and fittings**

There are two fittings near the bottom of the barrel. The spigot will go in one fitting and the drain plug will go in the other. Our barrels are built this way so a customer can elevate their barrel or leave it at ground level and still have room to fill a watering can. If the customer wants to have a spigot at both outlets, a 3/4" spigot (hose bibbs) can usually be purchased at any hardware store for around \$5.00. 3/4" plastic hose bibbs are usually also available for less money. A garden hose can be attached to the spigot. A garden hose will also attach to the overflow fittings at the top of the barrel. There should be no problems connecting a hose to the spigot.

There will not be a lot of pressure out of the bottom hose, as it is gravity fed. If a person wants to water their garden I suggest they purchase a garden hose, lay it out in their garden and drill 1/8" holes where they want the water to come out. Turn the spigot on and give it some time. Do not use weep hoses. They are flat and will only work under higher water pressure.

# How to Install and Maintain a Rain Barrel

## Placing your rain barrel

- Choose a downspout on your house or garage that is close to the plants and garden you water most. Other downspouts may be disconnected and directed into the yard.
- Choose a downspout where the overflow of the rain barrel will soak into your own yard, and not your neighbors' property.
- Place the rain barrel on a pervious (landscaped) surface that allows overflow from the rain barrel to soak into the ground. If placed on an impervious (paved) surface, rain barrel water overflow during heavy rains could pool or seep into the house or garage foundation. Make sure overflow does not go onto your neighbors' property.
- You may want to place the rain barrel on a 12" tall stand if you are going to use a hose to direct water to your garden (gravity will help move the water), or if you want to fill up a watering can from the spigot (so the can fits underneath the spigot).

## Connecting your downspout to your rain barrel

Tools: rain barrel, hacksaw, aluminum downspouts, 6 screws and a screwdriver, PVC downspouts, PVC cement.

1. Place the rain barrel near the selected downspout and plan out how the water will be directed to the downspout.
2. Disconnect the downspout from the sewer system by sawing the downspout above where the top of the rain barrel will be, leaving room for the elbow to be attached.
3. Attach a downspout elbow to the end of the downspout so that water is directed into the rain barrel through the plastic screen vent on top.
4. If you have an aluminum downspout, secure it to the elbow with screws.
5. If you have a PVC downspout, secure it to the elbow with PVC cement.
6. Place the rain barrel under the downspout elbow.
7. Optional: Attach a hose to the spigot, and/or to the overflow hole on the top-side of the barrel. Make sure that the overflow is directed into your own yard.

## Using Rain Barrel Water

- Use the water collected in the rain barrel!
- Water flowers, trees, shrubs, and lawn.
- Wash cars, windows or pets. Rinse hands and feet, tools, or muddy boots.
- Keep the rain barrel lid on tight at all times to prevent children and animals from entering or falling in.
- DO NOT DRINK WATER from the rain barrel.

## Maintaining your rain barrel

- Keep the rain barrel spigot closed when not in use so that the barrel can collect rainwater. Overflow water will spill from the black vent on the top and the overflow hole on the side near the top.

- Regularly check gutters, downspouts, rain barrel water intake screen, rain barrel mosquito screen and rain barrel spigot for leaks, obstructions or debris.
- Keep the rain barrel lid sealed.
- Drain the rain barrel before temperatures drop below freezing.
- In the winter, keep the rain barrel spigot open so that water does not accumulate in the rain barrel and freeze. It may also be turned upside-down or brought inside to ensure no water collects in the barrel.

## **Preventing Mosquitoes**

Your rain barrel should be equipped with a mosquito-proof screen under the lid.

Place the barrel on a pervious (landscaped) surface, so that overflow water soaks into the ground instead of pooling on paved surfaces.

- Keep the rain barrel lid sealed.
- Keep the barrel free of organic material.
- During the rainy season, every 3-4 days splash off any water that may collect on the top of the barrel. Mosquitoes need at least 4 days of standing water to develop as larva.
- If you believe mosquitoes are breeding in the rain barrel, empty the barrel completely. This will kill all mosquito larvae that may be in the barrel. If the mosquito netting is intact and there are no leaks where mosquitoes can enter the barrel, the rain barrel should be mosquito-free.