

Building a Rain Barrel

Getting Started

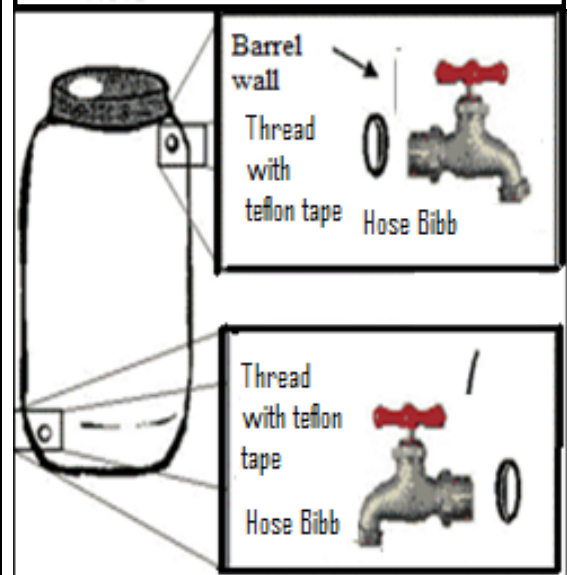
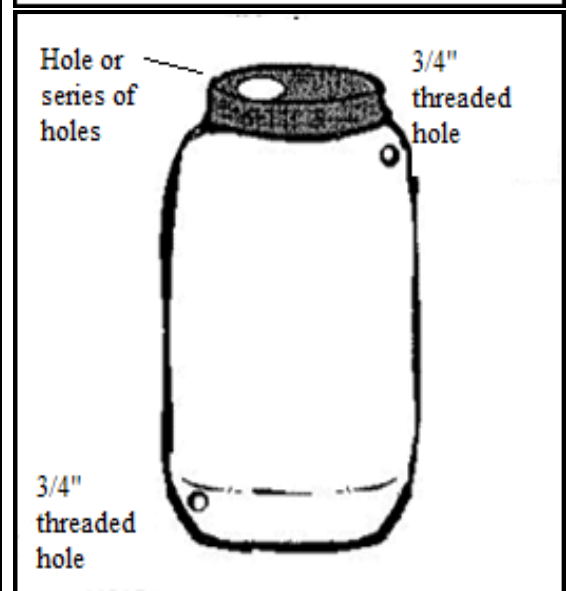
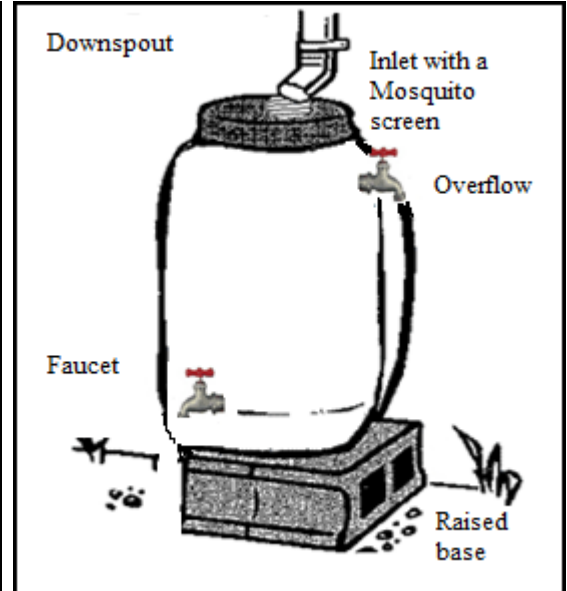
- Obtain a 55-gallon food grade or other heavy-duty plastic barrel.
- If it previously had food or any other non-toxic product in it, rinse your barrel out thoroughly. Avoid using bleach, as it is environmentally harmful.
- Obtain 2 cinder blocks or other method to elevate your rain barrel.
- Tool list:
 - Gloves and safety goggles/glasses
 - Drill
 - Hand held jigsaw
 - 1" Hole saw
 - 3/4" Hose Adapter (2)
 - 3/4" Hose Bibb (2)
 - Flexible downspout
 - Exterior approved water-proof caulk
 - Thread Seal tape
 - Mosquito proof fiberglass screen material

Step 1:

- Drill two holes with the 1" hole saw, one towards the top for an overflow and one towards the bottom of the barrel for the faucet.
- For the top there are several possible configurations Any one of these methods would be sufficient to allow for the infiltration of the rain water.
 - You can use the hand held jigsaw to cut a hole in the lid of your barrel to match the flexible downspout.
 - You may also drill a series of holes using your 1" drill bit for the water to infiltrate
 - Simply place a screen cover over the top of your barrel and secure it on with a bungee cord or other method.

Step 2:

- Thread the hose bibs with Teflon tape.
- Screw the hose bibs into the holes at the top and bottom of the barrel.
- Caulk around the hose bibs on the interior and exterior of the barrel.
- Screw the hose adapters on to each of the hose bibs.



Step 3:

- Cut the mosquito screen to fit the hole configuration you have selected for the top of your barrel. You may also simply cover the top of the barrel in its entirety with the screen material and secure with a bungee cord or other method.
- Attach a hose to the overflow of your barrel to direct the water away from your home. A full barrel has the potential to spill additional water over the top and may cause localized erosion or excess water at the foundation of your home. By installing a long overflow you will avoid these potential problems.
- Place two cinder blocks or other method to elevate the barrel under the selected downspout and place the barrel on this raised base.
- Cut your downspout about 4" above the top of the barrel, add the elbow from the bottom of the downspout and insert it into the freshly cut gutter downspout.
- Make necessary adjustments to the base to ensure that the barrel is level.
- Add a hose on the faucet, or keep it available to fill a watering can.

Safety/Other Considerations:

- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking or bathing.
- Keep the lid secure so children or animals cannot fall into the barrel.
- To avoid constant overflow during the rainiest months, attach a soaker hose to the faucet and leave in the open position.
- If a moss killer has been recently applied to the roof let a couple of rainfall events go by before collecting runoff.
- Remove the barrel from the downspout when temperatures approach freezing to prevent damage to barrel.
- An empty plastic barrel is susceptible to blowing away during strong winds. Keep at least five gallons in the barrel at all time to adequately weigh it down.
Re-caulk valves in the spring before placing barrel back in use.
- A full barrel can weigh ~450 pounds. A secure base and adequate balance are essential for your safety and the safety of others that may be around the barrels.
- Consider joining multiple barrels at the overflow tube for additional capacity!