RAIN BARRELS

What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel is a container used to collect and stores rainwater from your rooftop. The collected rainwater is then used later for activities such as lawn and garden watering. Water collected in a rain barrel would normally flow through your downspout and exit onto your driveway and into the storm drains. In fact, rainwater from many households and businesses flows directly into the storm sewer from the downspout.

Why use Rain Barrels?

- Rain barrels can help **lower your household water costs** by reducing the amount of tap water you need to use for things like watering your lawn or garden.
- Rain barrels **reduce pollution entering local waterways** by reducing household stormwater runoff, which often contains pollutants like sediment, oil, grease, bacteria, and excessive nutrients from fertilizers and pet waste.
- Rain barrels reduce the quantity of water entering stormwater drainage systems and bodies of water, thus reducing the potential for flooding events.
- Best of all, rain barrels are **inexpensive and easy** to build and install!

You Can Build Your Own Rain Barrel!

There are many online resources for building your own rain barrel. First you will have to obtain a large plastic, FOOD GRADE barrel. These can be obtained from rain barrel retailers (mainly online) or from other local sources.

The following listing provides the name of the parts you can use to make your Rain Barrel. The cost for all parts at a standard hardware store is approximately $15.

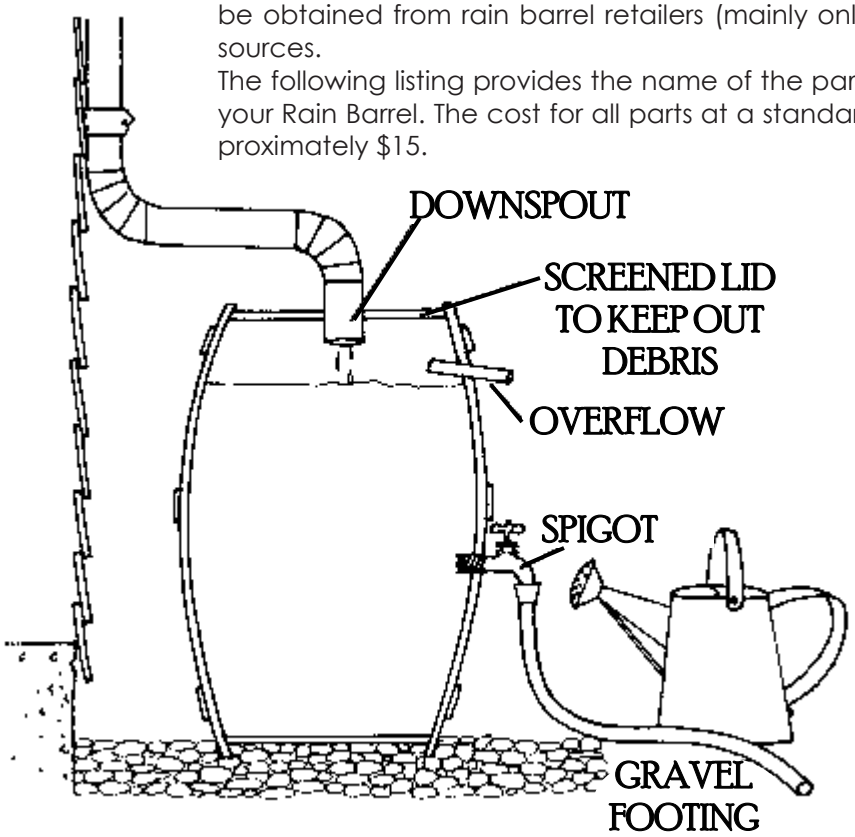


Image Courtesy of Low Impact Development Center

Hardware

Overflow:
1-1/4" Adapter Insert MPT
Size 24 25-50mm Metal Hose Clamp
1-1/4" Sump Pump Hose
Silicone sealer or teflon tape (opt.)

Inlet Grate:
6" NDS Green Grate
6-7" Metal Clamp #10
12" square Window Screen

Hose Bibb/Sillcock:
Brass Sillcock/Hose Bibb 3/4" MPT
Silicone sealer or teflon tape (opt.)

Tools

Drill
Router, jig saw, or coping saw
Screw Drivers
Measuring tape

Rain Barrel Assembly

Basic Instructions

Step A: Cut a hole in the top of your barrel for the inlet drain. The hole should only be large enough to allow the grate to rest on its flange. Cut the hole using either a RotoZipTM drill or carefully measure and mark the area to be cut, start a pilot hole, and cut out the marked area with a jigsaw.

Step B: Use a 1-1/2 inch keyhole bit to cut a hole to accommodate the 1-1/4 inch Overflow Adapter. You may need to rasp or sand the hole somewhat larger to screw in the Adapter. Expect a snug fit.

Step C: Use a 15/16 inch drill bit to cut a hole for the 3/4-inch Brass Hose Bibb.

Step D: Insert the threaded end of the Overflow Adapter Insert into the overflow hole. Keep the adapter straight as you screw it into the barrel.

Step E: Insert the threaded hose bibb into the already drilled hole. Keep the hose bibb straight as you screw it into the barrel. You may also apply a bead of silicone caulk or wrap teflon tape around the bibb before inserting it to ensure a tight, drip-free connection.

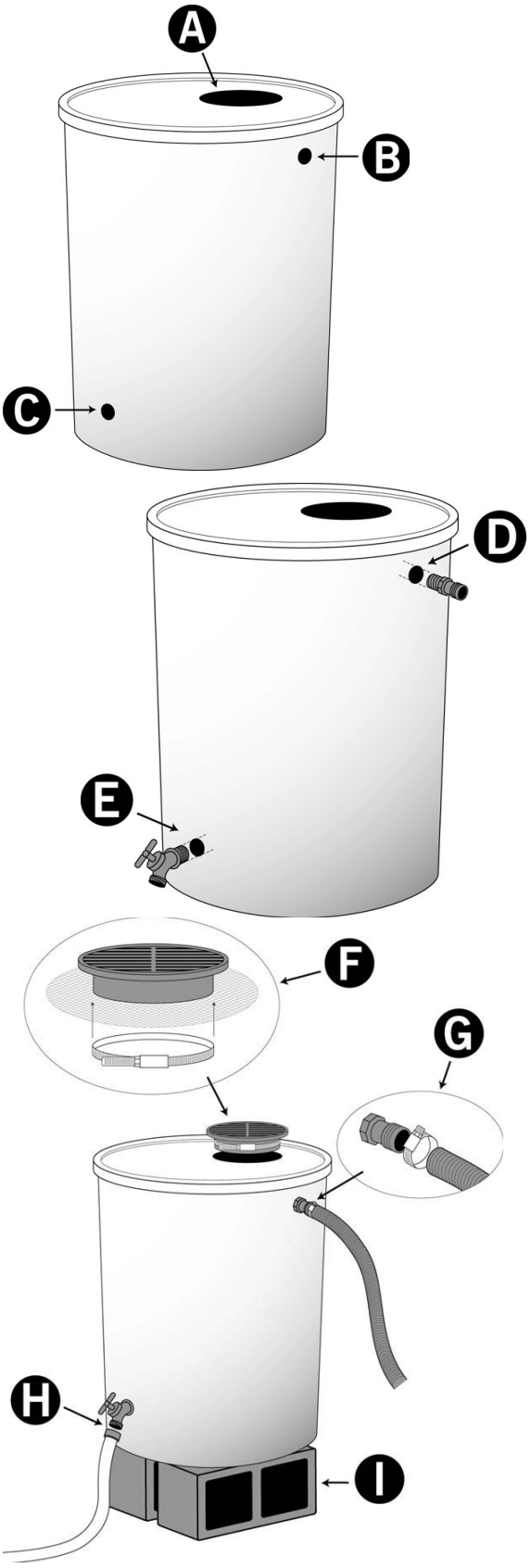
Step F: Use the larger #10 Metal Clamp to firmly attach the window screen to the bottom of the Green Grate. Tighten the clamp with a screwdriver or nut-driver. Place the Inlet Assembly into the barrel.

Step G: Slide the smaller size 25 Metal Hose Clamp over the barbed section of the Adapter Insert. Slide one end of the Sump Pump Hose over the Adapter and use the Hose Clamp to firmly attach the Hose to the Adapter.

Step H: Attach a garden hose or soaker hose to your Hose Bibb.

Step I: Use cinderblocks or similar pavers to elevate the completed Rain Barrel off the ground to ensure easier access to the Hose Bibb, and to facilitate gravity-fed drainage.

Notes: Be sure to use/drain your rain barrel at regular intervals, and before the winter season. Keep rain gutters clean of debris to prevent mosquito eggs and larvae from entering your barrel. Check connections routinely; clean debris from the Grate Assembly when needed.



AWARE
Alliance for Watershed Action and Resource Education

For More Information Contact:
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Instructions Courtesy of:

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