

Make your own *Rain Barrel*

Supplies

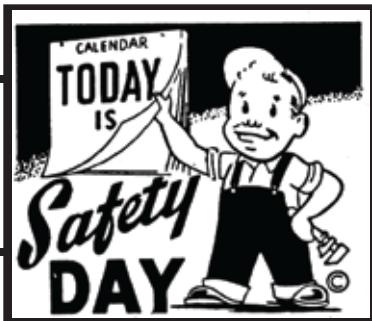
45-55 gallon drum or trash can, rinsed and fully sealed
spray adhesive, plumbing sealant, and Teflon tape

Tools

drill
4" circular drill bit
9/16" and 13/16" spade bits

Hardware

spigot
rubber washer
1/2" metal nut
1/2" PVC elbow
6" section PVC pipe
2 X 4" circular drains
2 X 4" circle insect screens
rubber stopper



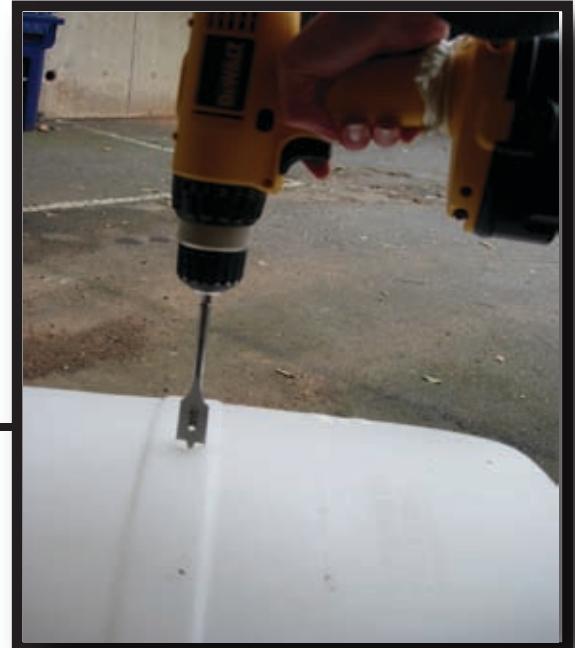
Please be careful when using power tools! Large plastic drums can be thick and difficult to drill. You may need a Helper to steady the barrel during drilling.

Instructions

Step 7: Drill two 4" holes in the top of the container, on opposite edges as shown.



Step 2: Using the 13/16" spade drill bit, drill an opening for the spigot about two thirds of the way down the barrel.



Step 3: Using the 9/16" drill bit, drill an opening for the stopper at the very bottom edge of the barrel.

Step 4: Using the spray adhesive, line the drains with the circles of mosquito netting.



Step 5: Wrap a few turns of Teflon tape around the threads of the spigot and slide on the washer. Twist the spigot into the front opening and secure with the metal nut. Screw on the PVC elbow so that it is pointing downward.



Step 6: Trim the PVC pipe so that it reaches from the spigot to the bottom of the barrel. Insert the pipe into the elbow. Caulk heavily around the elbow and the spigot on the inside and outside of the barrel.



Step 7: Place the drains into the openings in the top. Put the stopper in the hole at the bottom of the barrel. Let the sealant dry overnight, and you are ready to install.

Installation

Any configuration that gets water from your gutter system into the barrel will do. Some people direct water coming from the gutter through a flex pipe into the opening on top of the rain barrel. Others cut off the downspout at rain barrel height and let the water flow directly into one of the drains. To catch every drop of water in this setup, drill another 4" circular hole into a plastic bowl and put it between the drain and the barrel.



Maintenance

Little maintenance is required. If your rain barrel is transparent, you may need to periodically clean away algae buildups. Be sure to keep mosquitoes from breeding in the water by monitoring the insect screening for gaps or tears. You can also put a larvicide briquette in the barrel every month. These are available at all Athens-Clarke County fire stations, and they will not harm your plants.

Safety

Never drink water from a rain barrel or use rain barrel water on plants that you plan to consume. This water may contain hazardous chemicals from your roof.

There is a risk of drowning if your rain barrel has a removable lid. Keep the lid securely fastened at all times, and keep children and animals away from the rain barrel.