

# How to Build and Install a Rain Barrel



## INSTRUCTIONS

Before starting, clean your barrel; decide which downspout it will be attached to; purchase supplies and gather tools.

*Read page 2 before beginning for some helpful hints to make installation easier.*



### Supplies

- ◆ 1 - 55 gallon plastic drum (food grade)
- ◆ 1 - Flex-A-Spout
- ◆ 1 - Rigid Reducing Washer: 1 1/4" - 3/4"
- ◆ 1 - Hose Bib: 3/4" (spigot)
- ◆ 1 - 3/4" Galvanized 45° Street Elbow (overflow drain)
- ◆ 1 - Galvanized Bushing: 3/4" x 1/2"
- ◆ 2 - 6 x 12 Slot Zinc Hex Washer Head Sheet Metal Screws
- ◆ 1 - Expanded Aluminum Gutter Strainer (fits 4" round pipe)
- ◆ 2 - Concrete blocks

### Tools

- 1/2" drill (corded is best)
- 4" Hole saw bit
- 1" Speed bore bit
- Small hex drive bit
- Socket wrench with 30 mm socket
- Thread dope or glue (optional)
- Utility knife
- Level
- Hacksaw
- Safety glasses
- Shovel

### DRILL HOLES

1. Spigot — use 1" speed bore bit to drill hole on "front" of barrel about 3" up from lower edge.
2. Overflow — use 1" speed bore bit to drill hole on "side" of barrel about 4" from upper edge.
3. Downspout — use 4" hole saw bit to drill hole on top of barrel over one of the existing holes.



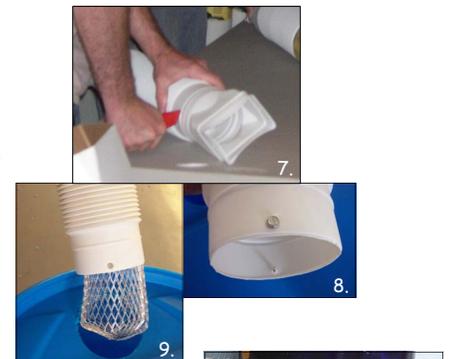
### INSERT HARDWARE

4. Screw in hose bib (spigot).
5. Insert the washer, then the bushing in the overflow hole from inside the barrel. The bushing threads will stick through the hole allowing the elbow to be screwed on. A socket wrench is useful for this step.



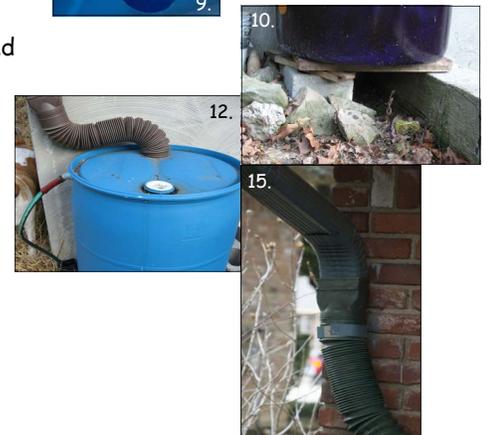
### PREPARE FLEX-A-SPOUT (FAS)

6. Measure downspout to determine which end of FAS to cut off.
7. Cut off the other end of the FAS above the 'cut line' using a sharp utility knife.
8. Screw in sheet metal screws across from each other on the round end of the FAS.
9. Compress gutter strainer and insert into round end of the FAS and let it expand. The screws should hold the strainer in place.



### INSTALL BARREL

10. Using shovel, set base of concrete block and level.
11. Set barrel on base.
12. Place strainer end of FAS into barrel.
13. Extend the FAS a small amount and mark the downspout where it needs to be cut.
14. Cut downspout using hacksaw.
15. Attach FAS according to directions that came with it.



# Helpful Tips: Installing and Maintaining a Rain Barrel



## SAFETY FIRST

Getting ready to build and install a rain barrel begins with ensuring proper safety measures are taken. Before drilling holes, make sure you wear safety goggles and heavy-duty gloves to prevent dust, sharp debris and particles from getting into your eyes or skin.

## Helpful Hints:

- Set barrel in desired location to determine placement of holes.
- Have a purpose for the water being collected; it helps if it is nearby so you do not have to tote water too far.
- Place barrel on a secure, level surface made from concrete blocks or composite lumber; wood may rot.
- Rain barrels work off of gravity, so the higher up they are, the better pressure you get.
- Make sure that you properly site and situate your barrel. If it topples over it could hurt you! A gallon of water weighs 8 pounds, therefore, a full barrel can weigh around 440 pounds.
- Rain barrels can be connected or 'stacked' to increase water holding capacity.
- Attach a short section of water hose to the spigot if spigot is not high enough for a watering can.
- Use a short section of water hose to direct water from overflow to drain into the grass or pre-existing underground drain.
- Paint your rain barrel using acrylic paint to match your house or as an artistic addition to your landscape.
- Use Teflon tape or pipe dope to prevent leaks around fittings.
- To clean strainer, compress to remove and shake debris out; clean 4 times a year (may need to clean more often if you live in the woods).
- Winter care: Unless you live where temperatures drop below freezing for 2 weeks or longer your barrel should be fine to leave outdoors. If not planning on using water collected during the winter months, open the spigot and let water drain out onto the lawn or bed area.
- Direct overflow water away from foundation; may damage foundation if not.
- Do not use water from a rain barrel for human consumption.
- When cleaning house with chemicals, disconnect rain barrel.
- Concerned about mosquitoes — drop in a Bti donut (*Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis*, or Bti, is a live bacterium that kills mosquito larvae but is harmless to other living things).



<http://tnyardsandneighborhoods.tennessee.edu>

# Local suppliers

Company	New				Reconditioned			
	Plastic		Lined Metal		Plastic		Lined Metal	
	Open Top	Closed Top	Open Top	Closed Top	Open Top	Closed Top	Open Top	Closed Top
<b>Faith Drum Co.</b> 9200 State Rt 152 Humboldt, TN (731) 784-5754	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$25.00	\$12.50	\$17.00	Rarely have
<b>Tennessee Container Corp.</b> 2790 Harvard Ave Memphis, TN (901) 452-1853	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$28.50	\$15.00	N/A	N/A
<b>Drumco Inc.</b> 3299 Tulane Rd Memphis, TN (901) 396-6484	\$75.57	\$61.01	\$71.57	\$63.22	\$29.29	\$20.70	\$22.04	\$22.46
<b>Southern Container</b> 3725 Compress Rd Como, MS (662) 526-5112	N/A	\$65.00	N/A	\$75.00	\$28.00	\$20.00	\$24.00	\$26.50