

Use

How can I use the collected water?

Water collected in rain barrels is great for watering your trees, shrubs, and flowers. The water is naturally soft, oxygenated, and devoid of minerals and chemicals.

Collected water is also great for washing your car, windows, or garden tools.

Important tip: Rain water can pick up contamination on the roof from bird droppings, leaves, and other airborne materials that should not be ingested. So don't drink the rain barrel water, use it on edible garden plants, or use it to water or wash your pets.

Care

How much maintenance is involved?

Rain barrels are easy to use and maintain. There are two things to remember: monitor and winterize.

Monitor the water level in your rain barrel. While your rain barrel should have an overflow pipe, if it gets clogged, that water may damage your foundation. If you go on vacation, plan ahead: connect your original downspout to ensure water is properly drained away from the house.

Winterize your barrel by emptying and storing it in a garage or shed to keep it clean for next year. Reconnect the original downspout to ensure that water flows away from your foundation. If you don't have a good spot to store it indoors, flip it upside down and place the concrete blocks on top.

Bring one home

The City of La Vista is offering a rain barrel rebate program to La Vista residents living within the Thompson Creek Watershed. The City of La Vista will provide 50% match, up to \$60, on the cost of rain barrels for those citizens who apply by March 7.

For more information, visit the La Vista Thompson Creek Stormwater website at:

www.cityoflavista.org/thompsoncreek

or call La Vista Public Works: 402-331-8927.

Rain barrels are available at many home improvement stores in the Omaha area. Rain barrel kits, in a variety of sizes, colors, and price ranges, are available online.

For more information, go to:

rainbarrelguide.com

rainbarrelsconserve.com

rainsaverusa.com

gardenwatersaver.com

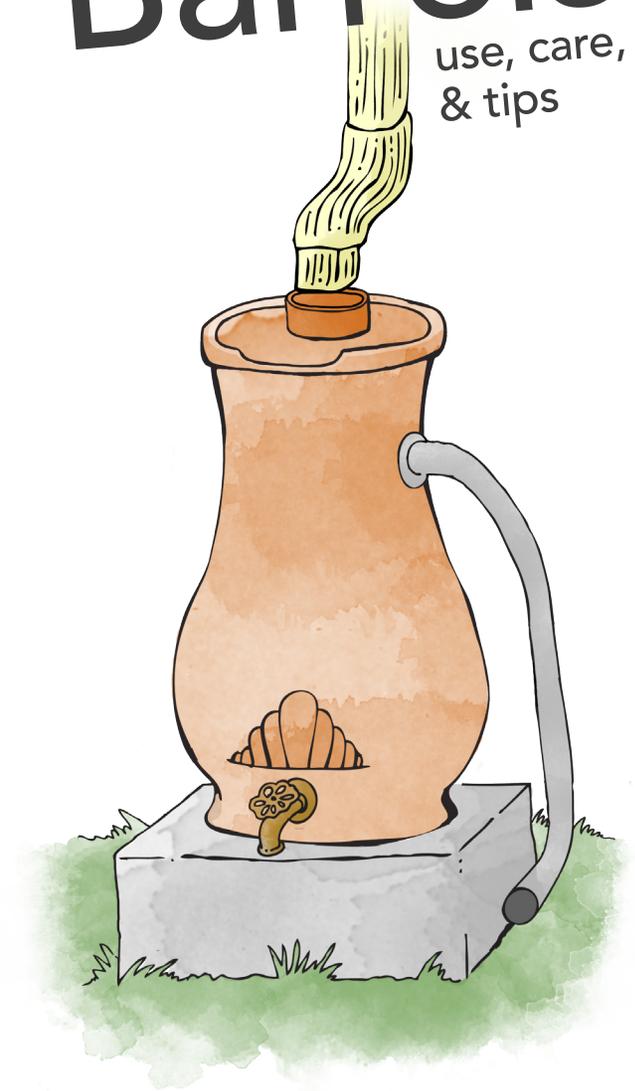
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Rain Barrels

use, care, & tips



What are rain barrels?

A rain barrel is a container designed to collect and store water from your roof. This water can be used in the future to water your trees, irrigate plants, clean off tools, or wash your car. Rain barrels typically hold 55 gallons of water and come with a spigot which can be attached to a regular garden hose for easy use.

Why should I use a rain barrel?

Rain barrels help to lower your water bills by collecting rainwater that falls on your roof each year.

Rain barrels also help improve our environment. Most of the time, that water that hits the roof goes directly into the downspouts, onto the pavement, and into the stormwater system. From there, the stormwater is dumped into the nearest stream.

An average home can generate over 600 gallons of water from a 1-inch rainfall, so why not collect some of it?

On the way, the water picks up pollutants such as litter, pet waste, excess fertilizer, and motor oil. Rain barrels play an important role in protecting our water resources by collecting the stormwater before it reaches our local streams.

Tips

1. Always keep your rain barrel covered. Not only will it reduce the risk of children or animals drowning, it will keep debris from clogging your drainage system.
2. Use a fine mesh screen to cover any openings to trap debris and prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
3. When you install a rain barrel, keep your existing downspouts. These can be reconnected in late fall when you winterize your rain barrel.
4. Make sure your rain barrel isn't see-through. Translucent barrels encourage algae growth.
5. Paint or decorate your barrel to make it a distinct part of your garden!
6. Elevate your barrel with concrete blocks so you can easily use a watering can or hose.

