



## HOW TO PAINT, PLACE AND MAINTAIN YOUR RAIN BARREL



**BE SUPER-CALI-FRUGALISTIC!**  
SAVE WATER. SAVE CALIFORNIA.

### RAIN BARREL PAINTING GUIDELINES

1. Before starting, wear gloves, breathing mask and eye protection.
2. Clean barrel with soapy water (or vinegar and water with 1:1 ratio) and rinse to remove grime.
3. Use sandpaper to scuff off outside of barrel. Sand until the surface becomes dull.
4. Clean barrel with water to remove the dust from sanding. Let it dry (can use towel or air dry).
5. Apply plastic primer (ex. Krylon Fusion and Rust-Oleum plastic spray paint). You will probably need two cans to coat the entire barrel.
6. Apply acrylic paint gently.
7. After paint is applied, allow at least 48 hours of drying time before applying clear coat.

### MAINTAINING YOUR RAIN BARREL

- Keep your rain barrel spigot closed when you are not using the water so that the rain barrel can collect water. Overflow water will spill from the black vent on the top and the overflow hole on the side near the top.
- Regularly check your gutters, downspouts, rain barrel water intake screen, rain barrel mosquito screen and rain barrel spigot for leaks, obstructions or debris.
- Keep your rain barrel lid sealed.
- In the winter, keep your rain barrel spigot open so that water does not accumulate in the rain barrel. You can also turn it upside-down or bring it inside to ensure no water accumulates in the barrel.

Source: SCWS Tips to Place and Maintain a Rain Barrel



## PLACING YOUR RAIN BARREL

- Choose a downspout on your house or garage that is close to the plants and garden you water most. Your other downspouts can be disconnected and directed into your yard.
- Choose a downspout where your rain barrel's overflow will soak into your own yard, and not your neighbors' property.
- Place your rain barrel on a pervious (e.g. landscaped) surface that allows overflow from your rain barrel to soak into the ground. If placed on an impervious (e.g. paved) surface, rain barrel water overflow during heavy rains could pool or seep into your house or garage foundation.
- You may want to place the rain barrel on concrete blocks if you are going to use a hose to direct water to your garden (gravity will help move the water), or if you want to fill up a watering can from the spigot (so the can fits underneath the spigot).

## CONNECTING YOUR DOWNSPOUT TO YOUR RAIN BARREL

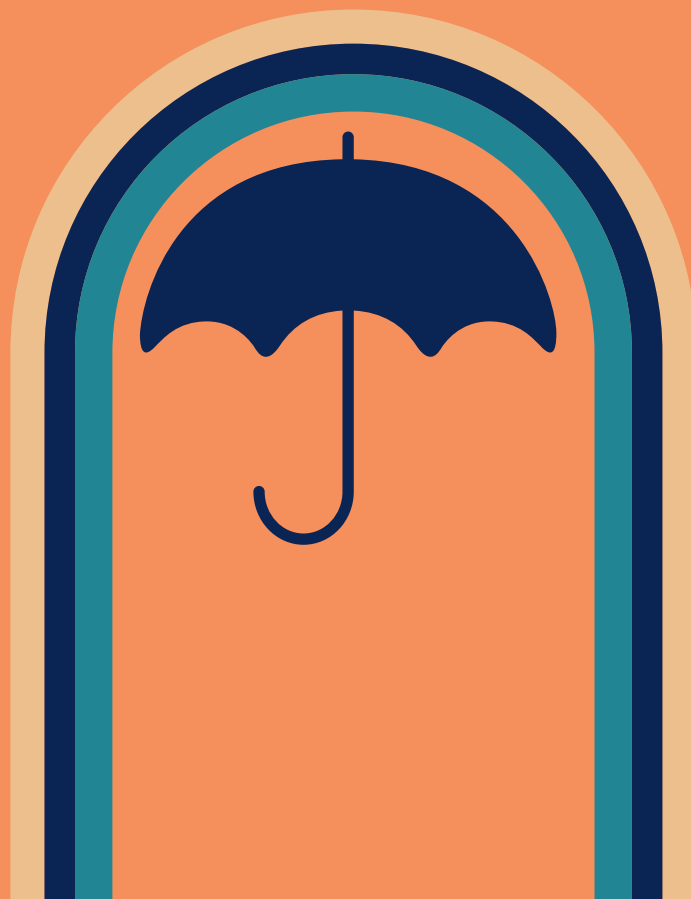
The Rain Barrel must be mounted in a way that allows the barrel to receive water unimpeded from a rain gutter. **Tools Needed:** Rain barrel. Hacksaw. Aluminum downspouts: 6 screws and a screwdriver. PVC downspouts: PVC cement.

- Place your barrel near the downspout you have selected, and plan out how you will direct the downspout.
- Disconnect your downspout from the line leading to the storm drain or curb drain by sawing the downspout above where the top of the rain barrel will be, leaving room for the elbow to be attached.
- Attach a downspout elbow to the end of your downspout so that water from your downspout is directed into the rain barrel through the plastic screen vent on top.
- If you have an aluminum downspout, secure it to the elbow with screws.

- If you have a PVC downspout, secure it to the elbow with PVC cement.
- Place your rain barrel under the downspout elbow.
- Optional: Attach a hose to the spigot, and/or to the overflow hole on the top-side of the barrel. Make sure that the overflow is directed into your own yard.

## CONTROLLING BARREL OVERFLOW

- Adjust your downspout so it is slightly above the barrel's mesh screen. We recommend using an elbow and rest the downspout on the mesh. The downspout does not fit into the barrel or have a specific place on the barrel. Adjust it as you wish.
- For increased water pressure, elevate your barrel on a stand or bricks.
- Make sure that all hoses extending from the barrel are directed away from your foundation.



## USING RAIN BARREL WATER

- Water your flowers, trees, shrubs, and lawn.
- Wash your car or pets.
- Rinse hands and feet, tools, or muddy boots.
- Keep your rain barrel lid on tight at all times to prevent children and animals from entering or falling in.
- **DO NOT DRINK WATER** from your rain barrel.

## PROTECT AGAINST MOSQUITOES

Mosquitoes need standing water to complete their life cycle. Follow these tips and prevent mosquitoes from using your barrel as their new home.

### COVER THE BARREL

- Use a fine mesh, wire screen to keep mosquitoes from laying their eggs.
- Eliminate any gaps between the screen and the top of the barrel.
- Purchase the screens with the barrels or separately at hardware/gardening stores.

### EMPTY BARRELS REGULARLY

- Use up all your water and empty out your barrel once a week to keep water from becoming stagnant.
- Even with overflow valves and spigots, some water can be left at the bottom of the barrel. Make sure to empty the barrel completely because mosquitoes don't need much water to breed.

### USE BACTERIAL LARVICIDES

- Purchase "Mosquito Dunks" and use them to kill off those pesky mosquito larvae.
- Most dunks last for approximately 30 days.
- These larvicides specially target mosquito larvae and do not cause harm to pets, fish or humans (make sure to follow label instructions).

Source: Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District.

