

Rain Barrel Use Instructions

Thank you for purchasing a Rain Barrel from Upcycle Products and the Washtenaw County Conservation District. Your purchase helps support the work of the District in Washtenaw County.

We hope you enjoy the satisfaction of using chlorine free rainwater on your plants and lawn while helping to do your part to conserve our water resources.

Remember that your rain barrel is constructed from USED food-grade barrels. They will have some scuff marks and scratches from shipping and handling.

They are inspected and cleaned, then modified into rain barrels. There are no significant scuffs or scratches which would harm the structural integrity of the barrel and lead to any leakage. The spigot is installed on the nicer looking face of the barrel



Please use the information below to set up and use your rain barrel.

Setup Instructions

The following instructions will guide you through choosing a location for and using your rain barrel.

1. Plastic barrels are like plastic bags. When they are empty they tend to relax back to a form similar to when they were first made. Flat spots on the body, dimples, and dents may be evident when empty. However, when you fill them up they will restore themselves to a round condition and will look more uniform in their shape.
2. Choose a spot for your barrel where you can either tap into or modify a downspout to fill your barrel from. Locate your rain barrel to keep kids safe by keeping the rain barrel lid tight at all times to prevent children, animals and insects from entering or falling in.
3. Once you have selected a location for your barrel, raise it up approximately 12" inches above the surrounding ground using concrete or landscape blocks, landscape timbers, the available pedestal riser, or other similar sturdy material.

This will allow you easy access to the spigot with a watering can or bucket. Additionally, the elevated barrel will ensure your hose, if used, will flow properly to where you want to use the water. Water seeks its own level, so if the end of your hose is higher than the spigot then water will not flow out.

Remember that a full 55-gallon rain barrel weighs over 450 pounds, so your support material will need to be sturdy enough to support this weight.

4. Install an overflow hose to the top fitting on the rain barrel to direct water away from your house foundation for times of high rainfall. Remember the intent of the downspout is to direct water away from the basement and foundation of your home. So DO NOT re-direct water back to the base of the home from the overflow fitting.

An alternative to the overflow hose is an available diverter that installs on the downspout to fill the rain barrel while water continues through the downspout; then automatically diverts all rain water down the downspout once the barrel is full.

5. Measure and cut the downspout 6-8 inches above the top of the barrel. Downspouts can be cut with a hacksaw. Use the existing downspout elbow or a flexible spout attachment to direct the water to the top of the barrel. Using a flexible spout allows you to locate the rain barrel around the corner from a downspout, if necessary. Flexible spouts can be purchased at hardware stores or home centers.



6. **CONNECTING MULTIPLE BARRELS TOGETHER:** The first 2 barrels are linked together from the bottom non-spigot fitting of the first barrel to the bottom non-spigot fitting of the second barrel. A 3rd barrel can be linked together by using the spigot fitting on the second barrel to the bottom non-spigot fitting on the 3rd barrel, then a 4th, 5th, etc. can be added. You can connect as many as you'd like. When linking to a spigot fitting be sure to leave the spigot in the "on" position.
7. If you want to change or enhance the color of your barrel there are two products recommended. The first is Ace Hardware brand spray paint, and the second is Krylon brand spray paint. Both do an excellent job on plastic and will not peel for years to come.

Using Rain Barrel Water

- Water your flowers, trees, shrubs, and lawn
- Wash your car; rinse tools or muddy boots.
- Do not drink water from your rain barrel.
- Do not cook or bathe with water from your rain barrel.

Winterizing your Rain Barrel

You do not need to remove the fittings or remove your rain barrel from its location for winter. Plastic fittings have been used on the barrel because brass and steel do not interface well with plastic barrels. These items expand and contract at a different rate than the plastic barrel, which is a major cause of leaking.

The only thing you need to do to prepare your barrel for the winter is to drain all the water out of the barrel, remove hoses, open the spigot, and remove the cap from the bottom linking fitting. You can leave the barrel standing all winter. Enough water will remain in them to keep them from being blown over and if they do freeze, you will end up with a bird bath size ice cube in the bottom which will not damage your rain barrel.

If you ever have any questions or would like to share your rain barrel experience please do not hesitate to write us at Sales@Upcycle-Products.com.

Warranty

UpCycle products carry a 5-year warranty on the material and workmanship. The only way this warranty can be voided is if you leave the barrel out during the winter without opening the spigot and linking hose fitting – if the barrel fills with water and freezes the barrel will crack.



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