

How to Install a Rain Barrel

1. **Prep the Area** - Make sure your 24x39" rain barrel will fit in your location next to the roof downspout. The location should be level ground, ideally next to your garden. Place 2 cinder blocks down flush next to each other where you want the rain barrel to live. Place the rain barrel on top.
2. **Install Spigot** - Open the lid and grab the bag containing the spigot with attachment. Place the spigot in the barrel's top hole at 14" above ground. *If you want to place your spigot lower you can, keeping in mind that the lower setting will require you to add 2 more cinder blocks to ensure gravity can get the water out of the tank.* Leave one washer close to the neck of the spigot and place the spigot into the hole. Place the other washer and other screw on the spigot neck from inside the barrel, turning the screw to tighten.
3. **Cut the Downspout** - With a hacksaw, tins snips or similar cut the downspout above the height of the rain barrel. *If possible, slide a small piece of wood between the building and the downspout to prevent hacksaw damage to the building.* Attach your flexible elbow connector to the bottom of the cut downspout, and point the elbow opening over the barrel opening.

Tips:

- Check out [installation videos](#) from The Great American Rain Barrel Co. (the folks who made your barrel!)
- Place the barrel in a shaded area out of direct sunlight if possible.
- Gravity is what makes the water come out. The higher off the ground the rain barrel is, the stronger the water pressure (2-4 cinder blocks will do!)
- A rain barrel will usually fill up after 1 rain storm. Use it to water your grass, gardens, indoor plants, and any food you're growing!
- Use the water in your rain barrel frequently to prevent water stagnation
- If you notice algae in your barrel after some time, you can clean it with a 1:1 solution of vinegar and water and a brush once a year.
- In the wintertime, consider taking your rain barrel indoors. However, if you choose to leave your rain barrel outside, make sure you open the spigot to allow water to drain.
- Rain barrel not working or leaking after install? Email us!
- Feeling artsy? You can paint your rain barrel!

Prefer **installation assistance** for a small fee? Email us at green.infrastructure@boston.gov

Installation questions? Call the City of Boston's Office of Green Infrastructure at (617) 635-1945 from M-F 9 am - 5 pm. **Tag us on Instagram, Threads and/or X @BosGreenIn** after installation!