

## Painting Your Rain Barrel

To paint a rain barrel a solid color, Krylon's Fusion spray paints are recommended as they are designed for plastic and do not require a primer.

You can also try a fun design! Make decorating your rain barrel a family or group project.

1. Prime the barrel with Zinser 1-2-3 (blue can).
2. Follow with a coat of interior/ exterior grade acrylic paint.
3. Paint your designs with acrylics.
4. Display proudly and share your idea with neighbors and friends.



This water-saving work of art was painted by artist Peter Thaddeus.



Rain barrels are just one element of The Conservation Foundation's Conservation@Home education and recognition program for homeowners. If you are incorporating native plants and water conservation features like rain barrels in your home landscape, you should be recognized for your efforts with Conservation@Home certification! Criteria for certification includes:

- Landscaping featuring native plants.
- Creation and protection of natural areas with steps taken to control invasive plant species.
- Efforts to reduce erosion and conserve rainwater on property.

## How do I get my rain barrel?

### Online or In Person

Order online at

[www.theconservationfoundation.org/rainbarrels](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org/rainbarrels)



**Pick up at the  
McDonald Farm**

10S404 Knoch Knolls  
Naperville, IL 60565

or



**Pay for Home  
Delivery**

Purchase a rain barrel in person by visiting McDonald Farm (address above) on Thursdays from 1-5pm April through September.

View current pricing at

[www.theconservationfoundation.org/rainbarrels](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org/rainbarrels)

Questions? Call 630-428-4500, Ext. 132

### About The Conservation Foundation

The Conservation Foundation is a nonprofit land and watershed protection organization dedicated to preserving open space and natural lands, protecting rivers and watersheds, and promoting stewardship of the environment in northeastern Illinois. Established in 1972 by business and community leaders, we work closely with citizens, elected officials, developers, land use planners, and park districts and forest preserves. The Conservation Foundation has helped protect more than 35,000 acres of open space.

[www.theconservationfoundation.org](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org)



# Rain Barrels



A low-tech way  
to conserve water  
and save money!

The Conservation Foundation  
10S404 Knoch Knolls Road  
Naperville, IL 60565

630-428-4500  
[www.theconservationfoundation.org](http://www.theconservationfoundation.org)

# What are rain barrels?

A rain barrel is used to collect and store rainwater runoff, typically from rooftops. Instead of running down driveways and sidewalks to sewers, rainwater is collected into a rain barrel where it can be stored for use in rain gardens, watering house plants, pet care, and washing cars. Rain barrels are a simple, efficient, low-cost method for homeowners to conserve water.



# Why get a rain barrel?

It is estimated that during the hot summer months, the average homeowner uses 40% of household water in the yard. The chlorine-free rain that falls on roofs can be used to offset household water usage and reduce water bills.

A quarter-inch of rain falling on the average roof yields more than 200 gallons of water. In the Chicago area, the average annual rainfall is more than 30", meaning every household could collect 24,000 gallons of water a year in rain barrels!

Conserving the rain that falls on our properties helps recharge our water supply and assists with flood control by reducing the stress on our rivers and streams.

Collecting rainwater where it falls reduces the negative impacts of having it run down driveways and lawns, where it picks up pollutants like motor oil and pesticides and carries them into our rivers and streams.

# What's special about our rain barrels?

- Made of food-grade upcycled plastic containers which can be painted. Available in a variety of colors.
- Sealed to keep them safe around children and animals.
- Screw-off lid is equipped with a screen to keep debris and insects from the water.
- 55-gallon containers stand about 40" high, 24" wide and weigh 400 pounds when full of water.
- A valve on the bottom of the barrels to which a hose can be attached makes the captured rainwater available through a simple gravity system.
- A separate, capped opening at the bottom can be used with a hose to connect to a second barrel.
- A capped opening at the top can be used with a hose to direct overflow away from your home's foundation.



# How to Install and Use Your Rain Barrel

Rain barrels work best when placed on a stand or concrete blocks under a downspout. The added height increases water pressure and provides space for a watering can to be placed under the spigot. Wooden stands are available on our website or at McDonald Farm.

- 1 Once the barrel is positioned on the platform, measure and cut the downspout to a length just above the top of the barrel. Downspouts can be cut with a hacksaw. Save the cut-off for reattachment in the winter.
- 2 Attach a 2"x3" or 3"x4" flex-elbow connector (available at hardware stores/home centers and on our website) to the downspout to direct water to the top of the barrel.
- 3 To use, attach a hose to the bottom valve and direct to landscaping, or simply fill buckets or watering cans to wash vehicles or water plants.

The ideal time to install rain barrels is when the rainy season begins in the spring. In the fall, empty the barrel and store it upside-down, then replace the downspout.



A spigot at the bottom of barrels allows for easy access to your water.