How to Build a Rain Garden

A Step by Step Guide

STEP 1
Select a naturally low spot in your yard at least 10 feet from your house.

STEP 2
Dig a shallow depression (2-9 inches). If the soil at that depth is clay, consider amending the soil with a mixture of 50% sand, 30% compost and 20% topsoil.

STEP 3
Direct your downspout or sump pump outlet to the depression. This can be done by digging a shallow swale or with a buried 4 inch PVC pipe.

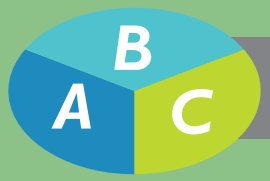
STEP 4
Plant your rain garden with native plants appropriate for your soil type and sun/shade conditions.

STEP 5
If it doesn't rain, water your plants every other day for the first few weeks until the plants are growing and well established.

STEP 6
Enjoy your rain garden! Once your plants are established they will thrive without additional watering.

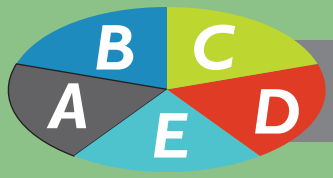
Right Sizing Your Rain Garden

You should create a rain garden to correspond to the size of your roof surface. The bigger your roof, the bigger your rain garden. A simple rule: Total Sq. Ft. of Section of Roof Draining to Garden x 30% = Sq.Ft. of Rain Garden.



Roof Size: 100 sq.ft.
Garden Size: 30 sq.ft.

Roof Size: 335 sq.ft.
Garden Size: 100 sq.ft.*



Roof Size: 750 sq.ft.
Garden Size: 225 sq.ft.*

Diversity is Key

The bigger your rain garden, the greater variety of plants you can use. Varied species create a diverse ecosystem and increase the likelihood of plants thriving. The graphics above show sample garden designs with each letter representing a different species of plant.

The Conservation Foundation's Top 10 Rain Garden Plants:

1. Sweet Flag
2. Blue Lobelia
3. Fox Sedge
4. Turtlehead
5. Blazing Star
6. Red Milkweed
7. Bottle Brush Sedge
8. Wild Blue Flag Iris
9. Black-eyed Susan
10. Blue Vervain

A Partnership Between

*Rain gardens must be a minimum of 100 square feet to qualify for the Village's Stormwater Utility Incentive program.