

Get Started!

1 Find a spot in your yard where you can easily direct the runoff from your downspout or other impervious surface. Do a percolation test to ensure that the soils in that spot can soak up rain water. To avoid drainage problems, place your rain garden at least six feet from your house if you have a basement (two feet if you don't) and five feet from your property line. Call your local jurisdiction to find out if you need a permit to disconnect your downspout or if there are special requirements.

2 Dig a shallow depression to create a rain garden area about six inches deep. You can make it as long and wide as you like - the bigger it is, the more rain water it can soak up. Don't forget to call before you dig so you don't hit any buried utility lines. In Oregon call 1-800-332-2344

3 Use the soil you dig up to create a berm on the down slope side and direct the overflow safely away from nearby buildings. Make the bottom of your

How to Do a Percolation Test

1. Dig a hole at least twelve inches deep.
2. Fill it with water and let it drain.
3. Fill it with water a second time. If the water drains at least two inches in an hour the second time you fill it, your soil has adequate drainage for a rain garden.

rain garden level. If you like, you can amend the soil in your rain garden with compost.

4 Plant your plants and then mulch. Water the plants until they are established.

5 Help us track of the number of rain gardens out there and receive a free rain garden sign by registering your rain garden at www.emswcd.org

Frequently Asked Questions

Do rain gardens breed mosquitoes?

No. Because rain gardens are shallow and are only built on soils with sufficient drainage, they are designed to dry out before mosquitoes can reproduce.

Will my rain garden have standing water for more than a day?

Rain gardens are designed to infiltrate water in about a day. If it rains several days in a row, it is possible that your rain garden may have standing water until the rain stops and the water has time to soak in.

Don't rain gardens require sandy soil?

If your soil can percolate two inches of water per hour, you have adequate drainage.

Can I install a rain garden if I have a septic system?

Yes, but it is very important not to place a rain garden over a septic system.

Shady Garden

A. Salal, <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>	5 (½ gal.)
B. Fringecup, <i>Tellima grandiflora</i>	5 (4" pots)
C. Piggyback Plant, <i>Tolmiea menziesii</i>	13 (4" pots)
D. Coastal Strawberry, <i>Frageria chiloensis</i>	12 (4" pots)
E. Sword Fern, <i>Polystichum munitum</i>	2 (1 gal.)
F. Creeping Oregon Grape, <i>Mahonia nervosa</i>	1 (1 gal.)
G. False Solomon's Seal, <i>Smilacina racemosa</i>	8 (½ gal.)
H. Deer Fern, <i>Blechnum spicant</i>	6 (½ gal.)
I. Wood Sorrel, <i>Oxalis oregana</i>	7 (4" pots)
J. Western Bleeding Heart, <i>Dicentra formosa</i>	6 (½ gal.)
K. Large-leaved Avens, <i>Geum macrophyllum</i>	7 (4" pots)
L. Stream Violet, <i>Viola glabella</i>	22 (4" pots)
M. Dagger-leaved Rush, <i>Juncus ensifolius</i>	4 (½ gal.)

