

If you are considering collecting rain water, aka “Water Harvesting”, please take the time to carefully evaluate your particular needs and the design features of the “catcher” you are going to use.

Desert Plastics is located in Albuquerque, New Mexico, a city that averages less than 9 inches of rain per year. We know something about saving water! We have been manufacturing rain barrels into this market for 7 years and we are now the #1 rain barrel manufacturer in the entire southwest. Thanks to the suggestions of our many customers, our products have become the highest value, most well thought-out barrels available in the U.S. We have recently passed the 400,000 gallon milestone in the Albuquerque area alone. This is more than (1) Acre / Foot of valuable ground water saved every time it rains!! To highly paraphrase Abe Lincoln: “You can’t fool that many people!”

Please consider.....

Exterior Shapes:

- **Cylindrical with vertical parallel sides.** This is the design utilized on three of our series: the Aqua Fria, Cubo, and Peso Series. Expanding ice **MUST** be dealt with or it will rupture your rain catcher, no matter what it’s made of. Vertical parallel sides offer less resistance to expanding ice than constricting shapes. Plus, this shape allows a very high hoop strength for the quantity of resin used. This is the reason that all large tanks are round.
- **Rectangular with tapered sides.** This is the shape utilized on our Niño Series. While not as structurally strong as the cylindrical shape, all things being equal, some people prefer this shape for aesthetic reasons. Because expanding ice pushing against vertical walls creates large forces in the corners of any shape that has corners, we taper our walls outward to dramatically reduce this stress. Tapering the walls outward also creates two additional benefits: 1) Removable tops allow the bottoms to be stacked and shipped like Dixie Cups, thereby reducing your freight costs. 2) Because we do not need the entire surface area of the top to capture your rain water, we can use the extra space on top to create a planter. And to top that off, the optional 6” deep removable planter tray makes this rain catcher even more valuable.
- **Barrel Shape.** This is one of the most recognized and attractive shapes in the world. It is also, quite possibly, the worst shape to use for a rain catcher in freezing weather. Once the barrel is half full, the expanding ice will have no where to go. For this reason alone, caution should be used before you spend your money. We currently have no barrel shapes.

Top styles:

Have you ever noticed the quantity of water that falls from your house in even a moderate rain? It may not look like much but the quantity is very deceptive. 1” of rain on 1000 square feet of roof equals 620 gallons! If you are attempting to capture as much as possible, you will want to make sure that your Rain Barrel can swallow all of the water your gutter can throw at it.

Tops and strainers are the heart of a rain barrel; we offer (5) distinct top styles that vary by product line.

- **The removable “Bowled” top.** This is our most popular top and is meant to capture rain water from downspouts or Rain Chains. The placement of the barrel is not important. Just make sure the downspout empties anywhere on the top. Central to our “bowled” top style is a very large, easily removable, easily cleaned, mosquito resistant basket strainer. It can handle all of the water you can throw at it and still provide serious straining capacity, even in the presence of large leaves.

It is securely held to the main barrel body by (4) sets of embedded Aluminum threaded inserts, Stainless Steel set screws, and Phenolic/Brass 3-arm knobs. Quality. Long-lasting. Easy to use.

If you want to use a bowled top with a flat roof, we suggest using one of our many beautiful Rain Chains to control the falling water all the way to your barrel.

This top is available on our Agua Fria Series only.

- **The removable “Canale” top.** Pronounced “ca-nal-lee”, this style is meant to capture free-falling rain water from your flat-roofed home. Notice the top is very open to capture as much falling water as possible, yet is safe enough around children to comply with the regulations of the city of Santa Fe. It is this combination of safety and large collection surface that makes it unique.

The large collection area is necessary because falling water “spreads out” as it falls. It occupies a much larger area after it falls six to eight feet and we must be ready to capture it. If the top is not properly designed, it will cause the falling water to splash excessively.

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The Canale Top is available in either the “Pie-shaped” pattern (some customers also call it the “Wagon Wheel” pattern) or the very popular “Polka Dot” pattern. Both are the same price and equally efficient so pick the one you like the best. The straining material is common door screen which keeps the barrel mosquito resistant, yet allows good water flow. It is attached using staples on the underside and can be easily and cheaply replaced at home. While this style is best with falling water, it also works very well with downspouts and Rain Chains.

This top is available on both our Agua Fria Series and Cubo Series. Pronounced “Coo-bo”, it means “Pail” or “Little Bucket” in Spanish.

On our most popular rain barrels, the Agua Fria Series, this top is securely held to the main barrel body by (4) sets of embedded Aluminum threaded inserts, Stainless Steel set screws, and Phenolic/Brass 3-arm knobs.

On our Cubo Series, this top is securely held to the main barrel body by (4) sets of embedded Aluminum threaded inserts, Black Steel set screws, and Zinc-plated wing nuts.

- **The fixed “Canale” top.** Pronounced “ca-nal-lee”, this style is also meant to capture free-falling rain water from your flat-roofed home. This top is permanently attached to the main barrel body and cannot be easily removed. Notice the top is very open to capture as much falling water as possible, yet is safe enough around children to comply with the regulations of the city of Santa Fe. It is this combination of safety and large collection surface that makes it unique.
It is available in the very popular “Polka Dot” pattern only. The straining material is common door screen which keeps the barrel mosquito resistant, yet allows good water flow. It is held into place on the topside by a poly ring that is stapled into the main body. This design can be easily and cheaply replaced at home. While this style is best with falling water, it also works very well with downspouts and Rain Chains.
This top is available on our Peso Series only. Simplicity. Safety. Value.
- **The fixed Rectangular top.** This top, along with it’s sister, the Removable Rectangular Top, are available on the Niño Series only. Pronounced “Neen-yo” and meaning “child”, this package is making waves everywhere!
The end-to-end water catchment area means it can be used in multiple positions. It also means this child can handle serious water input. Notice the poly strainer lined with screen. Simple. Easy to use. Effective.
The remaining area on the top is dedicated for use as a planter or planter stand. It is perfect for placing bright colored flowers up close to your front door. Or, what about a great place to grow your seedlings where they can be protected until they are ready to be moved to the “big bed”. Did you notice that we have provided vents to drain off any excess water? Whatever the use, this top is ready.
Some people prefer the simplicity of a fixed top. Others prefer the removable one. They both are a great value!
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The primary advantage of this top over the fixed version is in the freight arena. By removing the top from a Niño, the main bodies will stack inside of each other. This means that customers ordering multiples will enjoy lower freight rates. In reality, the more that is shipped at one time, the lower the freight rate on each one. This is very important for mass orders commonly seen with business-to-business transactions.

Issues with all Rain Barrel tops from all manufacturers:

Barrel placement can be critical, so make sure you understand how it will “work”. Our tops do not require you to direct the downspout toward an inlet. This means that our rain barrels will not have to “stick out” from a corner or that you’ll have to invest time and money to redirect the downspout. ●Because shallow sloping tops allow the rushing water to over-run the inlet and actually fall off the other side, we have designed a vertical wall around our top’s perimeter to help capture any stray water and redirect it back into the barrel. ●Small inlets choke on too much water so we designed large ones. ●A lot of rain water can be lost as falling water from a flat-roofed house hits the barrel top, so we designed the “Canale Top”, a large screened surface area to minimize it. ●Notice how our tops can be easily cleaned. ●We designed our screens to be easily replaced.

Safety

Is the barrel you’re considering safe? Let’s be clear: “safe” can be construed to mean a lot of things. However, “safe” to us means that your rain catcher should provide reasonable measures against intrusion by children and animals.

You should be concerned about animals because many of you live in close proximity to wild animals and they can smell water. Animals will frequent the areas that provide the easiest source of water. It is best that your house not be known, in the animal world at least, as a source of plentiful, easy to get water. Concerning animal intrusion, barrels must be built well.

Please, please, please think about what you are doing. Yes, using a trash can from Wal Mart with a cover made of scrap

plywood and held down with a rock will certainly capture water. And yes, that cute, and probably cheap, used wooden barrel would also collect rain water. However, think about using them.

Children are naturally curious. If they drop something into the water, the temptation will be to retrieve it. Worst case, a young child can innocently get upside down in the water and cannot get out. 50 gallons of water weighs over 400 pounds. A full-grown adult might not tip it over. This is every parent's nightmare.

On our removable-top versions, the tops are mechanically fastened to the main body to present a challenge to young children and animals. Ditto for the hole placement in our screens.

We offer an exceptional balance between both large straining area and animal / child resistance.

Overflows

Notice how the prospective barrel handles the water it cannot store.

We build professional grade. There is no way a garden hose (or two, or even three!) can handle the water from a common downspout in a heavy rain. No professional engineer would ever design such a thing. If the excess water is not properly eliminated, it will overwhelm the inlet and run down the barrel wall to undermine the barrel's base or, worse, flow into the house!

On our Agua Fria, Cubo, and Niño models, we hide a large 1-1/2" internal overflow inside the barrel so that it is hidden from view. Our Peso Series enjoys the same large 1-1/2" overflow as our other rain catchers, except they are external rather than internal.

All of our overflows terminate in a common U.S. standard 1-1/2" female pipe thread. From this large professional outlet, your local hardware can supply many options to move the extra water wherever you want it (such as a vegetable or flower garden).

Random thoughts

- Height is hose pressure. A taller Rain Barrel will always have more hose pressure than a shorter one unless you spend extra money to elevate the shorter one. If you want to invest in an elevated base, why not use your money to buy the taller barrel that will increase your pressure and capacity?
- Let us install your valves and overflow wherever YOU want them. It's no extra charge and it will make your Rain Barrel much easier to live with. If you have something unique to your site, let's talk. We can alter the number of overflows, the valve styles, and barrel colors.
- We do not screw our high-quality brass valves directly into the barrel wall because the hole cannot be easily fixed if you ever over-tighten the valve. We only use welded (not glued) fittings with integral standard pipe threads to locate valves because they allow repair to the threads.
- Our resins are 100% Food-Grade. This is very important in an emergency. Think about that.
- Our resins are completely recyclable and we do just that. Like you, we also care about the environment.

Be Careful! Be Picky! Be Intelligent!

It is our core philosophy that you are intelligent and that we should address you and service you in that manner.

Please notice our website. We do not ask you to believe flowery claims, illogical statements, and impossible-to-check testimonials while claiming to support and/or belong to a host of environmental groups. The internet is full of very friendly-looking, well-produced web sites that make such claims. Apparently, the main idea is that you will become so enamored with the website that you will overlook the fact that the product is only marginally designed, and will soon be a disappointment. This is an insult to your intelligence and certainly not a good place for you to spend your hard-earned money.

We are Desert Plastics in Albuquerque, New Mexico

We are the manufacturer. You have an open invitation to stop in and see our manufacturing facility in Albuquerque. We do not run our business out of an undisclosed location, making it easy to abandon you by closing a web site.

No matter whose rain catcher you buy, please make sure that you completely understand the product, and that you have thought out all of the details surrounding it. Finally, our compliments on your decision to harvest water!!

My name is Joe Barr and I am the owner of Desert Plastics. If something is wrong, it is my fault. If something is great, I assure you that it is due to the efforts of the wonderful collection of employees I enjoy.

With that in mind, we proudly place our products into the marketplace for your consideration.