

Painting Your Rain Barrel

When it comes to being creative, you're only limited by your imagination! Painting your rain barrel is not only a fun project, but it will help to protect the surface of the barrel from breaking down, due to the harsh effects of the sun

There are several methods you can use to paint your barrel. There are also several types of paint available -- and endless colors to choose from -- in retail stores.

Outdoors acrylics and spray paint work well, but the barrel must first be primed so that these materials adhere properly to the surface. A newer product on the market is a spray paint designed specifically for outdoor plastic furniture, but it will work on almost any plastic surface. The benefit to this product is that the barrel does not have to be primed before application of the spray paint.

Regardless of what type of paint with which you choose to decorate your barrel it is a good idea to apply a couple of coats of polyurethane to protect your work.

To prime your barrel:

1. Thoroughly clean the exterior surface of the barrel by wiping away excess dirt and grime with a clean rag soaked in a 1:1 mixture of vinegar and water
2. Using a fine to medium grade sandpaper, "rough up" the surface of the barrel.
3. With a dry cloth, wipe the barrel again to get ride of any fine plastic shavings.
4. Apply one coat of outdoor primer. Primer is typically white, but it can be mixed with another paint color or tinted to match the final design color of the barrel. Allow the primer to dry, according to the directions on the container.

Now the barrel can be painted any way you like - by stencil, a pattern, freehand, etc. You can even use some leftover exterior paint to make it match the walls of your house! Allow the paint to dry completely before applying 1 to 2 coats of polyurethane. Allow the polyurethane to dry in between coats.

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