



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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FYN Topic: Recycled Rain Barrels

Question: Do I need to use paint and/or a sealer before installing my recycled rain barrel?
From FloridaYards website

Answer: Yes, most gardeners prefer their rain barrels a color other than the ever-popular, recycled barrel 'blue' color. (I'm kidding). Plan instead to create a work of yard art that has curb appeal. For example, one clever FMB resident painted their rain barrel a single, base color, 'flamingo pink'. Visible at the front door, the house numbers were painted on its side. Before painting, check your community's standard Rules and Restrictions (Condo, ARC committees or HOA boards, etc.). Painting a rain barrel is like any good work of art, a process (clean, dry, prime, paint, design, decorate, seal & install). A single background color is often used. Properly done, your painted rain barrel will not be a source of neighbor's complaints. Peeling or fading paint does not need to be the norm. Start your rain barrel project using a food-grade, plastic barrel (55 gallon capacity). See several done by local gardeners at rain barrel workshops held at 9AM at Rutenberg Park. Cost is \$45 per rain barrel. Go to <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu> to pre-register.

Here's how to do it 'right.' Paint adheres better and lasts longer on a properly prepared surface. Use a rotating sander on all exposed surfaces. Follow with a thorough cleaning inside and out. A vinegar/water solution or soap and water or a standard soap pad work well. Before priming, remove tape or barrel labels. Clean and dry before priming with a white, water-based paint (ae. KILZ 2 Primer® is one brand.) Prime all exposed surfaces. Let dry and follow with a coat of a water-based, exterior house paint. Match it to your house colors. Reuse and recycle leftover house paint. To apply multiple, base colors, use spray paint (ae. Krylon®) and a stencil or template (a palm frond, etc.). For some, your painted barrel is now done. For others, they are just getting started. Flowers, fish, tropical scenes, birds and native plants often are used for final painting themes. Use acrylic house or craft paint to add your final colors, creating depth and texture. Again, be sure to recycle leftover paint from other decorating projects you've completed. Finally, (this is optional), apply Minwax® type poly-acrylic sealer. Repeat as needed for added glossiness and durability. Do small areas at a time. Turn the rain barrel, and finish the next area allowing time for each to dry.

<http://www.floridayards.org>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>



Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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