

# This Rain Garden SOAKS it up



- A Native Plants
- B River Stones (optional)
- C Berm
- D Mulch
- E Soil, Compost and Sand Mix
- F Sand Base (optional)
- G Overflow

## BENEFITS

- Absorbs 30% more water than lawn
- Directs water away from your home
- Low maintenance
- Keeps our rivers clean

Learn how to build your own rain garden at  
[ottawa.ca/rain](http://ottawa.ca/rain)

# Build a RAIN GARDEN

A rain garden is a simple and beautiful way to collect water and let it absorb slowly into the ground. Any sunken garden helps soak up water, but there are a few guidelines to ensure your rain garden will work most effectively.

**Preparing the Area:** A rain garden should be at least 3 m from ANY foundation. Water can be collected from a downspout, a rain barrel overflow or simply a low area on your property. It is important to understand how much water can flow from the source during a large storm to ensure your rain garden will be a suitable size.

If your garden is densely packed soil or clay, you will need to dig a hole to a depth of up to 85 cm (or deeper if your garden is quite small or your drainage area is very large). Soil should be excavated so that the edges slope down and away from any foundations.



**Remember to Call Before You Dig!**

Phone Ontario One Call at 1-800-400-2255 before you get started.

**Sand Base (optional):** Once the hole is at a suitable depth, you may add 20-25 cm of clear, clean sand to the bottom of the hole to allow for extra water storage.

**Soil, Compost and Sand Mix:** The soil you removed should be mixed with compost and sand so it is both high in nutrients and allows water to infiltrate easily. Fill the hole with your mix, leaving approximately 25 cm of space from the ground level. This will allow room for plants, mulch and a 10-15 cm depression for water to gather.

**Berm:** A berm is a slightly raised edge. Create a berm around your garden to keep water and mulch in place during a large rainfall.

**Overflow:** An overflow is a low point in your berm edge that directs water away from your home or any foundations should water levels exceed the capacity of your rain garden. Use a small channel of river stones through the berm to slow the run off and protect your soil from being washed away.

**Native Plants:** Plants in your rain garden should be able to tolerate both wet AND dry conditions. Native perennials and shrubs are recommended. Some suitable plants that do well in the Ottawa region can be found on the [City of Ottawa Website](#) or through the [Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Website](#).

**River Stones (optional):** This feature allows for water to flow freely to the sub soil and into your raingarden and adds a nice visual effect to larger gardens.

**Mulch:** Once you plant your garden you should add 10-15 cm of mulch. This will help absorb water and protect your soil from drying quickly.

**SLOW**  
it DOWN

**SOAK** it  
up

keep it  
**CLEAN**

**For more information about  
managing rainwater on your property visit  
[ottawa.ca/rain](http://ottawa.ca/rain)**