



Water Butts Guide

A Dobbies.com free guide



it's in our nature
[Dobbies.com](https://www.dobbies.com)

Contents

Water butt guide

Why you need a water butt	3
Water butts	6
Water butt kits	8
Water butt stands	10
Water butt taps	12
Water butt diverters	14
Water butt pumps	16
Water butt accessories	18
How to install a water butt	20



Sankey Tuscany Water Barrel 150 litre
£84.99



Sankey Standard Water Butt 200 litre
£29.99



Be Green 1300 Litres Water Tank
£600

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

- [Eco Living](#)
- [Water Butts](#)
- [Blog](#)



Why you need a water butt



Water butts - save water, save money and save the planet

A water butt will save you water, save you money and save the planet.

If every household in the UK got a standard sized water butt this would save approximately 30,000 million litres of water each summer. That's enough to fill Bewl water reservoir, the one that ran on empty in the hot summer of 2006.

Water is often taken for granted these days.

Every time we turn on the tap or flush the toilet, we all expect a plentiful supply of water.

The impact of climate change and the ever rising demand for water is putting a massive strain on our water supply. We need to cut down on our water usage

before it is too late.

The water butt will conserve this precious asset. You can save money and help out both the future of your family and the environment by using a water butt. It is increasingly important that we use our water efficiently and for a brighter future.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)

[Water Butts](#)

[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Why you need a water butt (continued)

Changes in our lifestyle and technology mean that we are using a lot more water than ever before. Increased use of dishwashers, power showers and washing machines are pushing our water supplies to the limit.

Using ways of saving water now, such as a water butt, will become a way of life for the future.

Here are some interesting points to think about while considering the value of a water butt:

Plants prefer rainwater

Rainwater is better for your garden as it has a balanced Ph level and is free of chemicals that your plants dislike, such as chlorine.

Reduce summer water usage

7% of the total water that we consume in the UK is used outside. This figure can rise to over 50% in the summer months. By using a water butt the rainwater will already have been collected and ready to use in those warmer months.

Save valuable tap water

It really doesn't make sense to be using high quality drinking water on your garden, when you can use harvested rainwater instead.

The process of purification is long and costly and it is wasteful when there is plenty of suitable water provided by nature.

Reducing your carbon footprint

You'll be pleased to know that by using a

water butt you will significantly reduce your carbon footprint.

By using less, you will decrease the energy costs associated with treating and pumping the water to your humble abode. Half a tonne of water is delivered to your door on a daily basis and by reducing this you will be a step closer to living a greener, carbon neutral lifestyle.

You recycle your glass bottles and tin cans so why not the rain?

Less Work

Set up a gravity fed irrigation system that will feed your thirsty flowers. This will save you much of the time you currently use to water your garden manually.

A water butt border kit or a simple micro irrigation kit can also provide a useful way to automatically water your flower beds and plant pots.

Reduce flooding

When it rains heavily, drains can quickly overflow which disrupts towns and can even cause flooding to shops, houses and gardens. By using a water butt you are helping to avert these flooding risks by keeping the water out of the storm management system.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)

Why you need a water butt (continued)

Saving money with your water butt.

By using the water you have collected in a water butt there are a number of ways that you can use it to save money. Some of them may surprise you.

Here is a selection of uses for that precious collected water:

- Washing the car
- Washing windows and doors
- To fill bird baths
- Flush toilets
- Use in washing machines
- Use in dishwashers

You may need other equipment such as a pump, and a certain amount of know how for some of the above.

Be creative with your rainwater use and keep those precious pounds in your pocket.

By using a water butt and putting these measures into action you'll start saving money and the environment instantly.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



[Poly Tank 220 Litre Water Butt Oak Effect](#)
£95.00



[Poly Tank 110 Litre Water Butt](#)
£75.00



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water Butts



Water butts collect and store rainwater

A water butt is a water tank which is used to gather and store water runoff, usually from rooftops via rain gutters.

Harvesting rainwater is not a new concept. But due to the availability of a clean, inexpensive and reliable water sources, its use has diminished over the last century.

By installing a water butt it is possible to make use of the rain water at a later date. This reduces the amount of mains water that you use, lowering both the economic and environmental cost of water usage.

Stored water can be used for a number of things such as; watering thirsty plants, washing cars, or even flushing toilets. If care is taken to make sure that the water is not contaminated and is adequately filtered, then it is also possible to drink it.

In the garden acid loving plants will guzzle it down as they prefer rainwater over hard tap water. Rather than topping up your pond with chemically treated tap water, rainwater can provide a more pond life friendly alternative.

Water butts come in an array of shapes, sizes, colours and materials. From your slim, space saving 100 litre butt, to a rain devouring 1300 litre tank. There are water butts available made entirely out of recycled materials. Others are designed to replicate the look of ceramic terracotta; these can be stylish enough to pass as garden features.



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butts (continued)

Water butts are tough and practical, and some come with child-safe locking lids. Guarantees are offered with some, to give you peace of mind after purchasing the item.

The smaller, space-saving water butts are ideal for gardens that are on the small side, or when you only have a minimal space to install it. Some of these can fit snugly into corners or in alleyways without restricting access, or even positioned against a wall.

The larger ones, which can hold huge quantities of rain water, are practical if you have a high demand for water use. Another benefit of the larger ones is that there is a smaller risk of any overflow, and need little tending.

When it comes to siphoning the rain water out, there are a number of accessories to aid you in the process. If you are using two water butts you can optimise the amount of rainwater you can collect by connecting them together.

There are pumps, diverters and mini irrigation systems to enable you to direct and use the collected rain water to wherever and however you wish.

Whichever you choose, you are sure to be making a step towards saving money and caring for your environment.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



[Sankey Slim Space Saver Water Butt](#)
100 litre
£19.99



[Be Green 900 Litres Water Tank](#)
£550



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt kits



Water butt kits include all you need to start saving water

Water butt kits come with all the accessories that will enable you to start collecting rainwater immediately.

Instead of wasting precious time by purchasing them all separately, water butt kits include all of the necessary attachments, together with instructions on how to put them all together.

All good kits generally come with these items:

1. Water butt - they come in various shapes, sizes and materials to store your rain water.
2. Water butt stand - to enable you to raise your water butt to a suitable position and height.

3. Rain diverter kit - for diverting the rain from your downpipe and into your water butt.

4. Water butt tap - these are usually twist lock taps, making the process of siphoning your water an easy task.

5. Childsafe locking lid - the locking cover protects children from climbing up into the water butt and falling in, and also acts to prevent debris and insects from falling in.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt kits (continued)

With a water butt kit you can start harvesting water straight away. Without the hassle of worrying whether you have all of the necessary parts, or whether the parts you buy are compatible with your water butt.

Other types of water butt kit are available, so make sure you check what is included.

There are water butt kits for linking two water butts together, maximising water collection from one source. Water butt micro irrigation kits are also available and use gravity to water your borders and plant beds for you.

A water butt kit is the easiest way to get everything you need in one easy purchase.



[Be Green Rainsaver 190 litres Waterbutt Kit](#)
£39.00



[Hozelock Water Butt Container Kit](#)
£19.99



[Hozelock Water Butt Border Kit](#)
£19.99

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt stands



Water butt stands can add style, stability and function

By using a water butt stand you can add function, style and stability to your water butt.

Function

To enable efficient siphoning of the water you have collected it is important to consider the height of your water butt and also the position of the tap.

By placing your water butt directly onto the floor it is generally not possible to fit a watering can beneath the tap. It is worth checking though, as some water butt models do have two tap locations which can allow a watering can to be filled whether on a stand or on the floor.

A water butt stand can alleviate any problems with gaining access to the twist turn tap.

Style

There are different water butt stands that correspond to their various water butts.

There are slim stands for slim water butts to achieve a fully uniformed appearance, and ceramic effect stands to add the finishing touch to that ceramic terracotta effect water butt.

The co-ordinating water butt stand will add the finishing touches to your water butt and help you achieve that desired garden feature look.



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt stands (continued)

Stability

When filled with rainwater your water butt will be very heavy, so it is important to consider the size, strength and positioning of your water butt stand.

If the stand is too small the water butt will become unstable and will be at risk from toppling over. The stand also needs to be strong enough to hold the weight of the water butt when full.

When installing your water butt stand make sure it is properly aligned, if the stand is not directly in-line with the butt it may become unbalanced as it fills up.



[Sankey Tuscany Water Butt Stand](#)
Terracotta
£27.99



[Sankey Slim Water Butt Stand Black](#)
£9.99



[Sankey Standard Water Butt Stand Black](#)
£12.99

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt taps



Water butt taps control the flow of your collected rainwater

Water butt taps are used to siphon out the water collected in your water butt for use on the garden.

Your tap will generally be included when you purchase a water butt. The water butt taps are quite easy to install, and generally screw right into the pre-fabricated hole in your water butt. On some water butts you may have to drill the hole yourself.

There is sometimes the option of two holes to fit the tap in to, depending on whether or not you will use a stand or place the butt directly on the floor.

You can screw them in by hand, and then secure the tap with the washers and nylon lock nut supplied.

Once installed they require little maintenance, if any. If you do need a

replacement, for any reason, you can find a tap for well under £10.

Most water butt taps have a traditional twist-lock action making it easy to control the amount of water that comes out of the spout and generally very user friendly.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt taps (continued)

Here are some things you need to consider when installing your tap:

1. Look at how close to the bottom of the water butt the tap is located. It needs to be fairly low so that you can drain out as much water as possible. However, the lower down it is, the quicker it's likely to clog up with debris.

2. Think about how quickly the water will flow from the tap. Some have a fast-flow tap that are wider than conventional taps, however, this is often at the expense of them being too large to connect a hosepipe.

3. If you do get any leaks, allow the water butt tap to dry and then apply some silicone around the tap.

Water butts and taps are quite durable, and can last many years in the elements if used as instructed. Correctly installing the tap is important to prevent any waste and extend the life and functionality of your water butt.



[Sankey Water Butt Spare Tap Black](#)
£3.99



[Be Green Water Butt Tap](#)
£3.00

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt diverters



Water butt diverters redirect rainwater in to your water butt

Water butt diverters redirect rainwater from your gutter into your water butt.

By diverting rainwater into a water butt, it can be used in the future for many household needs such as gardening and cleaning. When properly filtered rain water can even be used for drinking.

Water butt diversion systems can help direct and filter your water so it is stored cleanly in approved containers, reducing the risk of bugs or other pollutants. By using a proper flow and filtration system it becomes simple to make good use out of any water overflow.

There are different types of water butt diverters depending on your specific needs. Some types of diverters feature replaceable filters and others include an overflow system.

Replaceable filters are helpful because they make maintenance simple while ensuring consistent and clean stored water. Overflow systems will detect when your water storage container is full and stop diverting the flow. So you can avoid a messy puddle surrounding your water storage area.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt diverters (continued)

It is important to select a diverter that fits with your household down pipes. While most kinds are made to fit multiple down pipe sizes, if you have a bad connection it can create spillage which results in lost water and a muddy mess in your yard.

It is sometimes possible to position your down pipe directly in to your water butt. However not all water butts are shaped or have lids to allow this. For the majority of households water butt diverters are an essential part of your water butt system.



[Plastic Water Diverter with Filter](#)
£17.99



[Sankey Long Black Water Butt Diverter](#)
£11.99



[Sankey Black Water Butt Diverter](#)
£10.99

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt pumps



A water butt pump channels water with ease

Water butt pumps can save you the endless bending, lifting and filling of watering cans.

By installing a water butt pump you can pump water in and out of your water tank with a flick of a switch.

A pump can siphon water from paddling pools, flooded basements, or any other unwanted pool of water into your water butt for use at a later date.

A water butt pump not only saves more water but makes the awkward job of mopping up unwanted water an easier task.

Here are some things to consider before buying a water butt pump:

Safety features

All high quality pumps will generally have two filters; a coarse filter on the inlet to protect the pump and a fine filter on the outlet to protect the watering equipment.

Accessibility

It is important that there is a sufficient length of power cable to your water butt pump to make it safe and easy to use. Consider the distance to the nearest power supply from your water butt.



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt pumps (continued)

Noise Level

No one wants a noisy garden so it is important to be aware of the noise of a specific pump. All good water butt pumps should be quiet in use.

Guarantee

Most good retailers will offer a guarantee on your water butt pump, but it is worth checking before making your purchase.

Accessories

Water butt pumps can be set up with various other water butt accessories to achieve all round garden care.

Most pumps bought online can be used with a corresponding watering product such as a lawn sprinkler or a jet spray hose gun.

It is also possible to water all of your pot plants with a simple irrigation system by using a water butt pump.

A water butt pump is a great way of getting more from your water butt.



[Hozelock 3'n1 Water Butt Pump](#)
£59.00



[Hozelock Flood Pump 2in1](#)
£49.00

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt accessories



Make the most of your rainwater with water butt accessories.

Water butt accessories have been designed to meet a variety of garden watering needs.

There are liquids that enhance the quality of your harvested water, and simple irrigation systems that will use your water to its full potential.

Quality can be a problem with rainwater. Rainwater is generally free of harmful minerals and in most cases chemicals, but can be adversely affected by air pollutants and/or contaminated by animals in the catchment area.

The rain collects many other things on its decent from your rooftop and through your down pipe. You may experience some of the following in your harvested water:

1. Green water/algae blooms

This can be caused by leaving the cover off your water butt, which then increases photosynthesis in the water.

2. Unpleasant aromas

If rain is left over long periods of time, it is likely that bad smells will appear.

3. Bird faeces, flies and insects

Whilst the water butt lid will protect the water from the worst, bugs and droppings will inevitably find their way in.



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

Water butt accessories (continued)

Natural occurrences like this should not be worried about as they are easily tackled.

There are certain fluids that you can buy to treat the water that you have collected in your water butt. You can use a water butt biological treatment that uses natural plant extract to keep your stored water fresh.

There are also water butt fresheners that will take away those bad smells. A small 500ml bottle can treat a vast amount of water – up to 6400 litres.

Once your harvested rainwater is treated, it's ready to be used on the garden. Now to the big job of watering all of your vegetable patches and numerous plant pots.

There are accessories available to save you time and effort while completing both of these tasks. A simple water butt border kit will connect directly to the tap on your water butt and enable you to water your beloved rose beds and prize marrows.

Water butt border irrigation kits work on a gravity fed system using a length of porous hose, which slowly releases the water in the required places.

These are easily installed and can be combined with a pump if more pressure is needed, making watering the borders a simple matter of turning a tap on.

In the height of summer some pot plants and containers may need watering twice a day. But with the right water butt accessories your job will be made simple.

With micro irrigation drippers in each container, enough water can be dispensed in rapid time, leaving you to enjoy the beauty of your garden. Water butt

irrigation systems are also a great way to beat a hosepipe ban.

Water butt accessories save you time and money that can be better spent lounging in the garden with a well deserved drink.



[Hozelock Water Butt Treatment](#)
£7.99

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

How to install a water butt



Consider location, function and safety when installing your water butt

When installing a water butt it is important to consider location, function and safety.

To save yourself a lot of time and effort take heed of the instructions included with the water butt and keep in mind the points mentioned below.

Here are some tips to remember when choosing an appropriate location for your water butt:

1. Choose a position that is near the main places of use, for example near the vegetable patch or main flower bed.
2. Install the water butt only on a firm flat surface.
3. Make sure the area is strong enough to carry the weight of the filled water butt.

4. Choose a location near an easily accessible down pipe.

When it comes to fitting your water butt you may have to drill holes for the tap and any diverters you want to use. This will be specified in the instruction manual, which should be closely followed.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com

How to install a water butt (continued)

It is likely that you will need the following tools:

- power drill fitted with a hole saw
- tape measure
- marker pen
- hacksaw

You will also need the water butt itself, a stand (if desired), the tap together with any fittings, such as washers, and a rain diverter kit.

Step by step installation guide:

1. Once a suitable position has been found put the water butt and stand, if applicable, in its new location.
2. Mark the height of the water butt on the downpipe adjacent to it.
3. Use a hacksaw to cut the downpipe 3cm beneath this point.
4. Attach the rain diverter to the downpipe. Ensuring that both halves of the cut pipe are attached to the diverter.
5. Measure 8cm down from the top of the water butt and mark it with a pen.
6. Drill a hole through which the water butt connector can then be fitted.
7. Attach the water butt connector to the water butt by pushing through the drilled hole and screwing fittings in to place. Tighten them by hand to avoid any damage.
8. Attach the water butt connector to the rainwater diverter with the supplied fittings.
9. Place the lid on the butt and lock it into place.

If there is no risk of flooding and if the water butt is used regularly it is sometimes possible to fit the downpipe directly into the water butt.

Points to remember after installation:

1. If any drips or leaks occur after installing your water butt, empty the butt and tighten any fittings. Always be careful when tightening the tap, if it is made of plastic too much pressure may cause it to break. If needed apply silicone around any leaking fixtures or fittings.
2. Remember to leave room in the water butt if there is a risk of freezing. Water expands when frozen and may cause your water butt to crack.
3. If the water butt is accessible to children, remember to secure the lid to your water butt after use. The water inside may not be safe to drink and a secure lid will avoid the risk of drowning.

Eco living, water butts & accessories:

[Eco Living](#)
[Water Butts](#)
[Blog](#)



it's in our nature
Dobbies.com