

Tips for Creating Your Dream Space by Sara Shragal

Getting in the flow... how to create your own garden pond and water fountain.

If you enjoy the tranquil sounds of a desktop water fountain in your den or study, imagine having that relaxing sound emanate throughout your backyard or on your patio or deck? By building your own garden pond and waterfall, you can have that soothing escape pretty much any time you want.

While you can buy a pond or waterfall kit at retail chains or some hardware stores, you can also buy the basic items individually, which will include:

- Small water garden pump – 120 gallons per hour should be sufficient; also, the longer the cord the better as you'll need to situate your pond near a power source.
- Pre-formed plastic pond liner – if you're building a small pond, this is the way to go. If you want to go larger, you can purchase a flexible liner and form your walls to your preferred dimensions.
- Carpenter's level
- Sand
- Statues and ½" plastic tubing

Once you have all the equipment, you'll need to decide where you want the pond. The pond will require a power source, so if you don't have a nearby outside power source, you may want to hire a certified electrician to install a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) so you can situate the pond where you want it.

Next, digging the pond. First, you want to clear the area of all weeds. Then, turn the pond liner upside down and put in the desired place. Trace the perimeter, remove the liner and then begin digging. Once you've dug your hole to the depth of the liner, line the bottom of your hole with an inch of sand. This will give you some flexibility with the height of the liner.

Take out your carpenter's level and place it across the hole, front to back and left to right. Depending how level your hole is, move the sand at the bottom accordingly to even things out. Test it by placing the liner in the hole and putting the level on it. Adjust the sand at the bottom until it's level.

Now, the fun part. Place your liner in your hole and fill it with water. Place the pump in the water, but don't plug it in. Remember, your submersible pump needs to be underwater so that when you do plug it in, it doesn't overheat.

At this point, you can let your creativity take over. If you want to build a stonewall around the perimeter of your pond, go for it. If you want to plant flowers or other arrangements, knock yourself out. To take it a step farther, you can create own water fountain statue.

Again, this is an instance where you can get creative, and you don't have to spend a lot to get something unique. You might find something at a garden store, or even a yard sale. But whatever it is you want to use, you'll have to be able to drill through it. Why? Remember our ½ inch tubing from before? Well, you're going to drill a hole through your statue to fit the tubing. Then attach the tubing from the discharge adapter of your submersible pump through the hole in your statue. Place the statue where you want it and voila, you have a garden pond with a waterfall (once you plug it in, of course).

Having a garden pond/waterfall can be the crown jewel of your garden, patio or backyard area. And the real beauty is you can continue to sculpt and create your backyard depending on what you surround your pond with—e.g. rocks, plants, whatever you like. Just like your home, your backyard should be a reflection of you!

Sara Shragal is a staff writer for DirectBuy. For more information or other helpful tips for your home, visit www.directbuycares.com. You can send suggestions for future columns to questions@directbuycares.com.