



Build your own frog pond

A pond creates a home for frogs and fish and adds a feature for you to feast your eyes on. And you can design your own - in a few simple steps.

Location

- Build your pond away from existing large trees. This avoids problems with roots and with leaves falling in
- Choose a site with a little shade. You don't want your pond to overheat in summer.
- Try to make the pond as large and as deep as possible. This will help keep an even temperature for your fish. Your local council can advise you on the maximum depth you are allowed, with and without a fence.

Design Features

- Consider water supply and drainage as well as electricity supply for lights, pumps and filters.
- Build an overflow area (a place a little below the rest of the pond height). This is to control where the water overflows in case of heavy rain or overfilling.
- Screen your overflow to make sure no plants, snails, fish or eggs can escape. This keeps your fish in the pond and protects your local waterways from any potentially harmful escapees (especially important if you have non local fish in your pond).

Preparation

- Rinse your new plastic pond before you install it as fish are very sensitive to chemicals.
- If you choose a concrete pond you need to "cure" it with a combination of filling, scrubbing and painting with vinegar as well as several water changes.
- If you fill your pond with tap water remember to allow time for the chlorine in the water to dissipate or use a commercial chlorine neutraliser from the pet shop.
- Install your filters, fountains or waterfalls first and ensure everything is working as you intended it to.
- Now add your plants and let them settle in for at least a week. Remove any obviously dead leaves as they will pollute the water.
- At last, add your fish to your new backyard habitat.

Plants

- Native plant nurseries & water garden nurseries will have a range of native plants for planting in and around your pond.
- Reeds and sedges are ideal for the shallows of your pond. They look good, keep the water clean and provide shelter for fish and frogs.
- Keep your plants in containers for easy maintenance and to protect your plants.
- Containers with emergent plants can get top heavy. Secure them with bricks.
- Plants around the outside of your pond will provide shade and shelter to your backyard buddies.

Fish

- Local native fish are best as they tend to be tadpole friendly. You can buy them from many aquarium shops, some native plant nurseries & from water garden suppliers
- Float the bags with your fish in your pond and add small amounts of pond water to the bags to gently introduce the fish to the water of their new home.
- Don't feed your fish for the first 2 days to allow them to settle in. Then feed them once a day with as much as they can consume in 2-3 minutes.

Frogs

- If you want frogs around your pond build it a little away from houses - frogs can make a bit of noise.
- Gently sloping sides allow frogs to get in and out.
- Rocks & slabs overhanging the edge can stop frogs from getting out, so some gaps are needed.
- Have plenty of plants in and around the pond to shelter frogs & tadpoles.

Maintenance

- Clean filters regularly
- Top up the water in your pond with the garden hose, but add no more than 10-20% at a time
- Regularly scoop out dead plant material - it makes great compost
- Clean your pond thoroughly at least at the start of spring before the water temperature starts to rise.