

Build a Mini Frog Pond

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Frogs, lizards, birds and water bugs all benefit from having access to fresh water in the garden (especially on hot days). There are two ways you can encourage fauna, by putting in a bird bath, or build a frog pond!

Frogs inhabit most gardens, and many tree frogs simply use standing water to reproduce in. Many gardens do not have the room for large and expensive frog ponds, so here is a simple DIY activity using a laundry basin from your local hardware, some fresh water and some water plants.

Frog ponds are best placed in a cooler/shadier part of the garden, not directly under trees (as leaf drop can pollute your pond) and away from areas where pesticides or roof run-off contamination can occur.

Here's how!

STEP 1 Choose your spot and dig! (to the same depth as your basin, about 30cm)



STEP 2 Once you have dug the hole place the basin in and carefully back fill around the edges. The top of the basin should be at ground level. Fill with water. If you are using tap water, don't worry, sunlight breaks down any chlorine in a day or two, to make it frog friendly!



STEP 3 Place your selected native water plants, try to include an oxygenating plant (these plants filter the water like a bubbler would in a fish tank) such as Carex, Juncus or Stipa. Make sure there is easy access for small animals to get out if they fall in, and a couple of overhanging

groundcovers/rocks for frog to climb in and out. A brick or a rock in the bottom of the basin provides hiding spots for water critters.(you can also mulch around the pond, and plant native groundcovers such as viola, centella or native grasses)



STEP 4 Watch and wait! You should never catch frogs from local ponds and put them in your garden this can spread disease and alter natural systems. Instead, wait for your frogs to come to you. In this pond at a council office on the first day a range of birds visited to drink and bathe, after a couple of weeks frog spawn(eggs) were seen and now we have two types of frogs happily living in the basin.



When it was first put in.....



Important things to note:

Tap water alone can contain chloramine so it is best to add *water ager* to your pond (available for pet shops). Better still, use rainwater!

Chytrid Fungus can be inadvertently added to ponds through pond plants and can be deadly to frogs and tadpoles. Disinfect your pond plants by washing all soil off the roots away from the pond then soak the plant in a 1% solution of house-hold disinfectant for 5 minutes before adding to your pond.

You can place a basin on your balcony or put many in your garden. Listen for the froggy sounds at night to try to identify your garden fauna or catch a frog and use a frog book to identify it!(remember to put the frog back where you found it!) Check the water levels and top with fresh water as required.