

## Bird Baths

All Ages

A bird bath is an effective way to lure birds to your yard. All birds need a reliable, clean source of water, not just for drinking, but also for bathing and preening (cleaning and straightening feathers). Providing this necessity can be as simple as setting out a shallow basin of water. Place it where you can watch the fun.



### Bird Bath Basics

- ⇒ Keep it **shallow**, no deeper than 5 cm, you can use almost any shallow container
- ⇒ Keep it **in the open**, 75 cm of open space all around, birds need to see danger coming particularly house cats - the number one cause of death for song birds.
- ⇒ Keep it **safe**, a textured surface for sure footing, a flat rock ramp from the rim for gradual access, a rock "perch island" in the centre if the bath is wide
- ⇒ Keep it **clean**, a quick rinse and refill daily and a scrub weekly will do, avoid concrete baths as they encourage algae growth and are difficult to clean thoroughly
- ⇒ If possible, keep it under an overhanging branch to provide a safe place to fly up to if the bird feels threatened, a resting place to preen, and shade to keep the water cool

There are endless possibilities for homemade bird baths. Here are a few ideas; a plant saucer on a tomato cage, a textured dish on a decorative pot, a simple trash can lid, painted clay flower pots and a large plant saucer on the ground with shepherd's hook and jug dripper. Place the bath on the ground, a pedestal or hang from a tree, as long as it is easy to keep fresh and clean, the birds will be happy and you will be entertained.



Dripping water makes a bird bath even more attractive to birds. Recycle a container, punch a tiny hole in the bottom, fill with water, and hang it so it drips into the bath.

Try capturing a slow motion video of a bird taking a bath.

Watch your bird bath closely to discover what type of bird drinks without tipping its head back like all the other birds do.

Record the time of day birds most often visit your bath. Refresh the water just ahead of their favorite "bath time".

Keep a log of the visitors to your bath. [Merlin](#), a free app, can help you identify the birds. You could learn more about each one at [All About Birds](#).



Doves and Pigeons

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