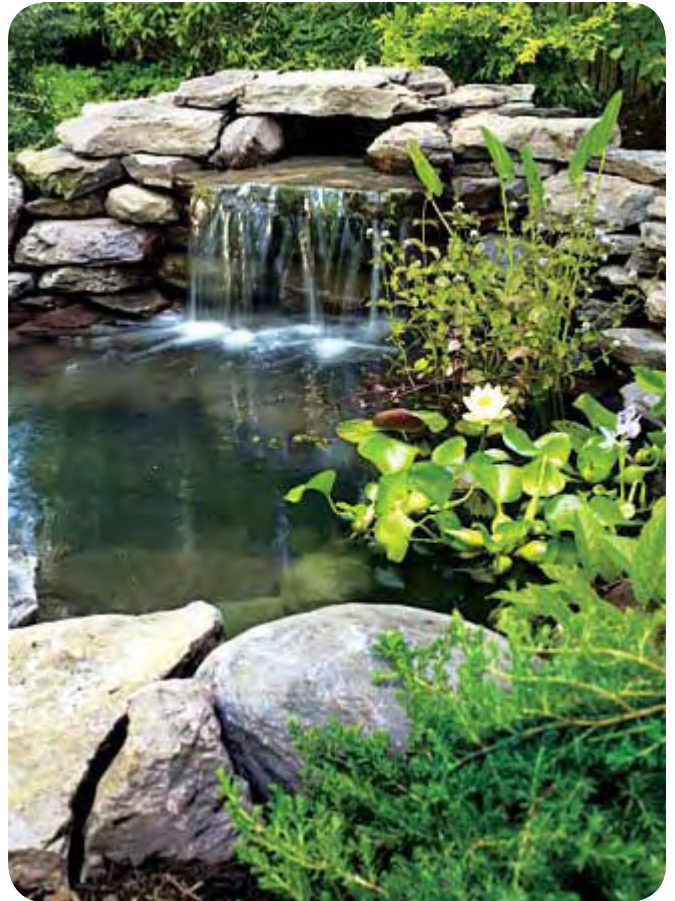


tranquil garden pond

If you've always wanted a garden pond, you're not alone. With the growing popularity of "water gardening," many people look at their ponds as an interesting, ongoing project.

The average pond measures about 2.5 x 2 metres, but it can be built to virtually any size. In some designs, water trickles down a long, meandering stream before emptying into the pond. Many smaller ponds, like the kidney-shaped one shown here, have water running over a large flat rock and spilling directly into the pond. This style is easier to build and can fit into the smallest gardens.



Digging It

Once you've chosen a location for the pond, lay out the perimeter using rope or a garden hose. Next, mark the outline with ground limestone and start digging. Excavate to a depth of 40cm, piling the dirt at the rear of the pond, where the waterfall will be located. In the centre of the pond, dig down another 20cm to form a pit where the pump will go. Now, line the hole and the pit with fine sand and rake it smooth.

Laying Rubber

Fold the rubber liner lengthwise, centre it over the hole and unfold it. The liner should overlap equally on all sides. Using your hands and bare feet, carefully press the liner into the hole. Then, use a garden hose to fill the centre pit with water to hold the liner in place.

Stone Surround

Start stacking stones on the pond floor, also called the plant shelf (to differentiate it from the pump pit). Lay the stones in a 30cm wide layer along the wall. Overlap the stones between courses and use smaller stones to fill any sizable gaps.

Position the Pump

Next, set the pump's hose in position so that it extends from the centre pit to the top of the hole. Carefully lay stone directly over the hose. Continue stacking stones until they're even with





If you are going to be using large, heavy stones around the pond, be sure the nursery or supplier delivers the stone directly to the pond site.



the ground. Set a single layer of flat stones along the plant shelf, aligning them flush with the edge of the centre pit. Then, place one flat rock in the bottom of the pit to serve as a base for the pump.

Set large, flat rocks - called coping stones - around the perimeter. Stack stones at the rear of the hole to form the waterfall. A good rule of thumb is to build it to about 40cm above the water level. Set the waterfall weir in place atop a large, flat rock (the spillway stone) that is tipped forward slightly. Connect the weir's hose to the pump's hose coming out of the pond. Trim the rubber pond liner to match the waterfall opening at the front of the weir, then attach the liner to the weir using its screw-on faceplate. Backfill around the weir with dirt and continue piling up rocks around the waterfall area. Conceal the weir by placing a rock on top of it.

Plugging In

Fill the spaces between the stones on the pond floor with small river rock. Then, take a hose and wash down the stonework around the entire pond. Pump or bail the dirty water from the pit.

Connect the pump to its hose and set the pump on a flat stone in the bottom of the pit. Check with an electrician to ensure a safe installation of your pump and power cord. Use a hose to fill the pond to within 10cm of the coping stones.

Once the pond is filled, plug in the pump. In a few seconds, water will gently spill out of the weir.

Pond Safety

Ponds, especially those stocked with fish and frogs, are inviting to small children and can constitute a drowning hazard. Incorporate safety features in your original design. A pond that is adjacent to a path also can pose a tripping hazard, especially at night. In such an area, the path should be illuminated with low-voltage lights.