

Making Your Own Solar Powered Birdbath

If you are thinking of doing a few upgrades to your garden, have you ever thought of getting a solar powered pump birdbath? In fact, why buy one, when you can make it?

What are the benefits of having a solar powered pump fountain?

The pros to getting one are:

- a: Fountains circulate the water, keeping the bird bath from going stagnant
- b: The fountain is wireless and does not have to be plugged in
- c: The pump works on direct current, so no inverter is required
- d: The pump uses minute power (only 6volts) so very few solar panels are needed
- e: The fountain usually operates during the day when the birds are out in the sun, so batteries are not essential
- f: You can save more money by making the entire birdbath and fountain yourself, even the solar panels.
- g: The birdbath is wireless making it very portable.

And what does it take to make a solar powered pump birdbath?

The simplest option would be for you to add solar panels to an already working birdbath and fountain.

The cheaper, more labor intensive approach would be to get a birdbath with the right holes drilled for the fountain to be installed. And then add on the pump, fountain attachment, irrigation and power supply.

If you go the DIY route, then you will need to get:

A Birdbath

There are a variety of birdbaths to choose from - cascading, copper, terracotta, resin, or ceramic. It does not matter what you get, just as long as it is ready for a fountain to be installed.

The Fountain Attachment:

This attachment can be source from your nearby hardware store or garden center. It is an optional extra that helps make the water spout out of the top, instead of a small trickle.

Small Fountain Pump:

Depending your birdbath size, the volume of water to be pumped and how high you want to pump it, will help you decide on the voltage and size pump needed. For your average, medium-sized birdbath, a small 6 volt DC pump will suffice.

Tubing for irrigation:

When buying the irrigation for the fountain, it is best not to get piping that is too wide, otherwise the right water pressure will not be maintained and the pump will not work properly. So before you buy the wrong tubing, get advice from your local garden center and see what they use in similarly sized birdbaths

Silicon Sealant:

Silicon sealant helps fill any cracks where water could escape, such as where the tubing enters the top of the birdbath. It can also be used to insulate any bare wires.

Some Solar Panels:

This is what sets this off-grid system apart from conventionally powered birdbath fountains. The pump will help determine how many solar panels you need. For a 6 volt DC pump, you will need at least a 6 volt solar panel, but rather double up on the solar panels for times when the sun is weak.

NB: To get the solar panels, you have 2 choices:

1 : Buy a small commercially available solar panel from any outlet, such as Walmart.

2 : Make it yourself. With the right guide it is rather easy and much cheaper to make your own solar panel in a matter of hours. If this is something you would love to try do, then keep reading...

To maximize the efficiency of the solar panel, it could be mounted in a simple frame with the ability to be angled towards the sun.

How easy is it to put it all together?

With the right tools and parts and a the right attitude you could have a fully functional solar powered pump birdbath in an afternoons work. It really depends on your level of experience, but many of our friends (even housewives) have managed to make their own fountains.

A good idea would to add some batteries to the birdbath, so that the excess solar power can be stored and to power the pump at night. For a 24 hour fountain, you will need:

1) Deep cycle battery:

Because the pump is only 6 volts, a 12 volt battery is more than enough. It should be a deep cycle battery (car battery) that can store the power for a longer time.

Solar charge controller:

This is not that important, but to protect the battery from over-charging and to maximize it lifespan, you should a charge controller that sits between the solar panels and the battery.

Over and above it being affordable to build, what I like about putting together my own solar powered pump birdbath, is that once the first one is finished, making the second or third one just gets easier. It could even be a fantastic gift for a close friend or newly wed.

About the Author

If you want to make your own solar panels for the fountain, then Tim McDonald recommends you get a copy of [The Earth4Energy Sneak Peek](#) - a FREE look inside the top-rated step-by-step solar power guide.

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