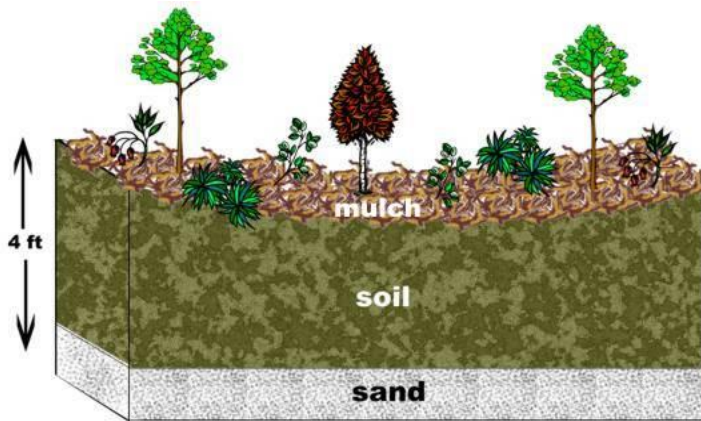


How do you build a rain garden?

For a small residential "backyard" type of installation.



Step #1: Dig a Hole

Dig an area 3-4 feet deep. The surface area of a rain garden (in square feet) depends on the size of the area that contributes runoff to the garden (the drainage area). The surface area of a rain garden should be roughly 7% the size of the drainage area (multiply the size of the drainage area by 0.07).

Step #2: Add a Layer of Sand

Fill the bottom of the hole with a layer of sand one foot deep at the bottom. This reservoir will hold water long enough to slowly percolate into the ground.

Step #3: Fill with good Organic Soil

Fill the rest of the garden with good gardening soil consisting of a mix of top soil, sand and leaf compost. The surface of the of the rain garden should be about 6 inches below the surface of the surrounding ground so that water can collect there.

Step #4: Add some Native Plants

Plant attractive native groundcover, shrubs and trees, which thrive on excess nutrients that are harmful to surface waters, while also providing habitat for local wildlife.

Step #5: Cover with a layer of mulch

Covering the garden with four to six inches of mulch absorbs water and keeps it moist during dry periods.