

Installing New Gutters

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Gutters are essential to protect a home's siding and foundation against water damage. Unfortunately, because they are used so often they get damaged regularly. Some damages are minor and easy to repair; but some are so extensive that it's easier to install an entirely new gutter system than repairing the existing one. There are many different types of gutters available but the best type to install is snap-together vinyl. These gutters are moderately priced and almost completely maintenance-free. They don't distort over time the way metal gutters tend to do and if they dent, just pop it out. Plus, vinyl gutters are easiest to install.

Tools & Materials Checklist

- Extension ladder
- Ladder stabilizer
- 2 stakes and wooden pieces
- Tape measure
- Chalk line
- Powered screwdriver
- 1 1/4-inch deck screws
- Hacksaw

- Vinyl Components:**
- Gutter sections
- Gutter hangers
- Inside or outside corners
- Connectors
- End caps
- Downspout outlets
- Downspout elbows
- Drainpipe
- Drainpipe hangers



Tip: Ladder Safety

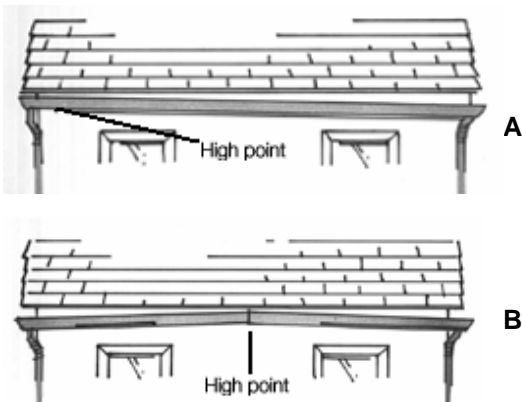
Use an adjustable ladder stabilizer that attaches to your ladder and braces on the roof. This helps keep the ladder from slipping and allows you to work on the gutters that are directly in front of you. It is important to brace the feet of the ladder. Put the ladder feet on blocks and then drive a stake into the ground so that it is right behind the ladder feet.

Step 1. Plan Gutter Run

Make a map of your house before you buy any gutters. Figure out how long the gutter run is, how many downspouts you need and the length of the downspouts. If your old gutter system worked well, copy it. That is, put the downspouts where the old downspouts were, etc. Your local True Value store can help you figure out which vinyl gutters work with your house.

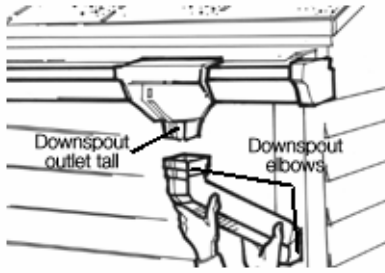
Step 2. Snap Chalk Line to Guide Gutters

There are two ways to mark the slope of your gutters. If the gutter run is less than or equal to 35 feet put the high point of the run at one end and slope the gutter down to the other end where the downspout is. (Figure A.) The high point is one inch down from the top of the fascia (the board from which the gutters hang) and the slope is 1/4 inch every 10 feet. If the gutter run is more than 35 feet put the high point in the middle of the run and slope it down to the downspouts on each side. (Figure B.) Again, the high point is one inch down from the top of the fascia and the slopes are 1/4 inch every 10 feet. Mark the slope by snapping the chalk line so that you have a guideline when putting up the gutters. Have someone hold one end while you hold the other.



Steps 3 - 9 on Back

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Step 3. Install Downspout Outlets

Attach the downspout outlets using one of the 1-1/4-in. deck screws and a power screwdriver (a power screwdriver makes the project go along much faster). The downspout outlets should be even with the chalk line and lined up so that the downspout attaches at the edge of the house. These outlets won't be at the extreme end of the run because the roof goes out farther than the house. In Step 7, attach small sections of gutter at the very end left of the roof.

Step 4. Attach Gutter Hangers

Fasten the gutter hangers to the fascia every 24 inches. Start attaching them using 1-1/4-in. deck screws about 1-in. away from the ends of the roof to give the gutter support at the ends and to make room for the end cap. Make sure that you are following the chalk line so that the gutters are angled properly.

Step 5. Attach Gutter Corners

Attach the corners that don't have downspouts and should not be the end of the run.

Step 6. Attach End of Gutter Run and Cut Gutters

Cut the gutter sections with the hacksaw so they fit between the downspout outlet and the end of the roof. The section should go from about the middle of the downspout outlet to the roof end. Put the end cap on and snap the section into the downspout outlet and hook the gutter onto the hanger. Cut the other sections so that they go between the downspout outlets. Remember that the gutter section starts from about the middle of the downspout outlet.

Step 7. Hang Gutters

Make sure to do this step on the ground. Connect the gutter sections together using the connectors by snapping them onto the gutter sections. For a run less than 35 feet, attach the end cap to the end without an outlet. Now, with the help of another person, hang the gutters. The other person needs to hold one end while you snap the gutter into the outlet and while you hook the gutter onto the hangers.

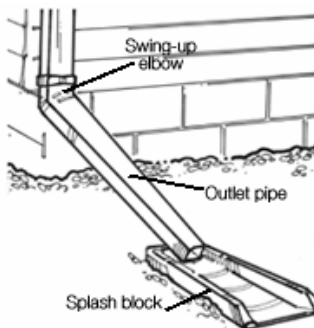


Tip: Cutting Gutters

When cutting gutters, you need a solid base to work from, so turn the gutter upside down and have it resting on the ground or a piece of wood as you cut.

Step 8. Attach the Beginning of a Drainpipe

As for the downspouts, cut a piece of drainpipe so that it fits between the downspout elbow on the outlet and the downspout elbow on the wall. Put the elbows on the pipe and snap it onto the outlet (Figure C.) Use a drainpipe hanger to secure the other elbow to the wall.



Step 9. Install a Drainpipe

Cut another piece of drainpipe that fits between the elbow on the wall and 1 foot above the ground. Snap the drainpipe into the elbow at the top and attach another elbow to the bottom. Fasten a drain pipe hanger at the lower elbow. Cut a section of pipe to funnel the water away from the base of your house - this length is personal preference. Use a plastic splash block to protect your house from water seeping back toward the foundation.

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