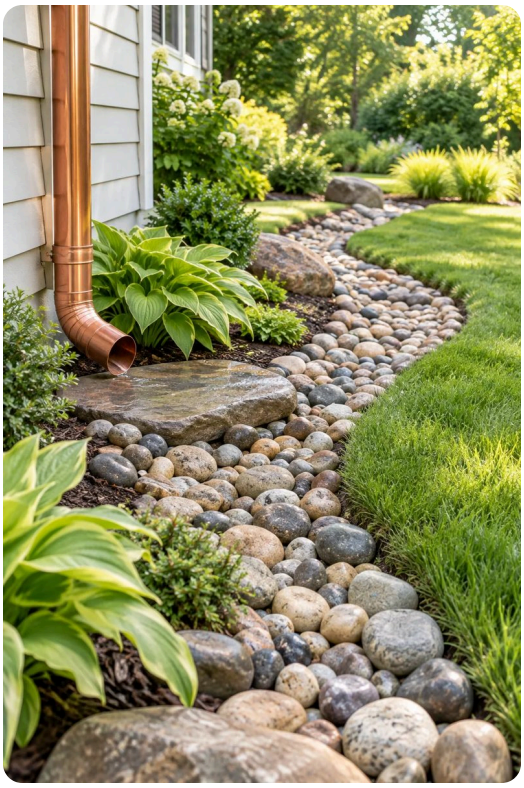
Dry Creek Downspout Build Sheet

Transform muddy gutter runoff into a stunning, functional stone channel.

Calculate your exact trench dimensions and material needs before lifting a shovel. Use this guide to build a lasting, beautiful drainage feature.



Key Drainage Measurements

2.4 inches
drop per 10 ft (2% fall)

2 inches
flagstone splash pad gap from siding

4+ oz
non-woven fabric below the stones

12 inches
minimum uphill overlap for fabric seams

1/3
depth to bury anchor boulders

3/4 inch
drainage gravel to lock cobbles together

Anchor the Curves

Place your largest boulders exclusively on the outside edges of sweeping trench curves where rushing water pushes with the greatest force.

The Dig & Layer Sequence

1. **Shape the trench** Dig a broad saucer and use excavated dirt to berm the outer curve.
2. **Install the fabric** Pin geotextile with six-inch staples every three feet; leave excess extending up walls.
3. **Set anchor boulders** Sink heavy stones on curve outer edges for structural stability against rushing water.
4. **Layer and lock cobbles** Add washed river rocks and sweep fine gravel into the voids to prevent shifting.
5. **Plant the outfall** Finish with chartreuse sedges and shredded hardwood mulch pulled back from the stones.

Stone & Trench Sizing Chart

Find your row: **Run length**

Run length	Your pick	Why
10 feet	24 in wide, 0.5 tons	Requires 3 anchor boulders
20 feet	24 in wide, 1.0 tons	Requires 6 anchor boulders
30 feet	30 in wide, 1.8 tons	Requires 9 anchor boulders
40 feet	30 in wide, 2.4 tons	Requires 12 anchor boulders
50 feet	36 in wide, 3.2 tons	Requires 15 anchor boulders

Pre-Dig Site Checks

- ◯ Inspect existing downspout for hidden leaks, loose brackets, or crushed elbows.
- ◯ Verify gutter flow volume during a severe storm to size capacity.
- ◯ Examine soil: heavy clay needs width, sandy needs reinforced banks.
- ◯ Ensure splash pad rests below the downspout rim to prevent ice backup.
- ◯ Call 811 to mark all underground utilities before breaking ground.
- ◯ Confirm neighborhood HOA guidelines permit visible front-yard hardscaping.

Project Notes & Measurements

Enjoy your beautiful, highly functional new dry creek bed!