

Instructions for Rock Tumbling from RockTumbler.com

Get to know your new rock tumbler...

Please read the instructions supplied with your new tumbler and become familiar with it. The instructions explain how to use the tumbler successfully and maintain it properly.

Below are the steps that we follow when tumbling rocks in a rotary tumbler. We have more detailed instructions, videos and other information at RockTumbler.com

Here's what you will need...

Our rock tumbling checklist includes: [rough rocks](#), coarse [grit](#) (60/90 mesh), medium grit (120/220 or 150/220 mesh), fine grit (500 or 600 mesh), rock [polish](#), Ivory bar soap, a plastic colander, a plastic bucket, a tablespoon, a toothbrush and safety glasses.

Step 1 - Coarse Grit...

Begin by filling the tumbler barrel about 2/3 full of rough rock. (The rocks should have a range of particle sizes.) Then add coarse grit (see chart at right for amount) and enough water to almost cover the rocks. Close the barrel and run the tumbler for about seven days.

After seven days carefully open the barrel and pour the contents into a colander over a plastic bucket. Rinse the mud and used grit from the rocks, catching the rinse water in the plastic bucket. **Don't dump used grit, mud or muddy water down the drain** - it will clog your plumbing. Clean the rocks, barrel and lid thoroughly. You don't want coarse grit in the barrel during Step 2.

Step 2 - Medium Grit...

Place the rocks in the tumbler barrel. Then add medium grit (see chart at right) and enough water to almost cover the rocks. Tumble for seven days, open the barrel and clean as described in Step 1. Remember, don't dump grit, mud or muddy water down the drain. If you inspect the dry rocks they should have a surface like "frosted" glass.

Step 3 - Fine Grit (PrePolish)...

Place the rocks and fine grit (see chart at right) into the tumbler and add water to almost cover the rocks. Tumble for seven days, open the barrel and clean as described in Step 1. Remember, don't dump the used grit, mud or muddy water down the drain. The dry rocks might have a little luster now. ☺

Step 4 - Polish...

Place the rocks and polish (see chart at right) in the tumbler and add enough water to almost cover the rocks. Tumble for seven days, open the barrel and clean up the rocks as described in Step 1. Remember, don't dump the used polish, mud or muddy water down the drain. If you have done everything correctly and cleaned carefully between each step you should now be rewarded with some brightly polished stones! Wow! ☺

Burnish...

Sometimes rocks will look a bit dull when they come out of the polishing step. A couple hours of [burnishing](#) will often brighten them up. To burnish, place your rocks in the tumbler with water and a couple heaping tablespoons of grated Ivory bar soap. Run about two hours. Now you should have some really bright stones!

Happy Tumbling! ☺

We have more detailed [tumbling instructions](#), [videos](#) and more at RockTumbler.com.



Wear safety glasses when working with grit and opening tumbler barrels.

How Much Grit & Rocks?

Barrel Capacity	Amount of Rock	Amount of Grit or Polish
2 pounds	1 pound	3 tbs
3 pounds	1.5 pounds	4 tbs
4.5 pounds	2.25 pounds	6 tbs
6 pounds	3 pounds	8 tbs
12 pounds	6 pounds	16 tbs



Fill tumbler barrels 1/2 to 2/3 full. Overfilling / underfilling yields poor results. We fill ours a little over 1/2 full.

DO NOT Pour Down The Drain!!!



Don't pour used tumbler grit, mud or muddy water down the drain. It will clog your plumbing!



For "perfect" [tumbled stones](#), inspect the rocks after Step 1. Then repeat Step 1 for rocks that are not nicely shaped. We run most of our rocks two weeks or more in Step 1! ☺



Place your tumbler where you can easily check it a couple times per day.