

Digging Deep-Gardening with Cynthia Brian

Romancing the Stone

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4. Remove any lawn and other vegetation. (Check with EBMUD if you are removing grass as you may qualify for a rebate by replacing your lawn with the new dry creek.)
5. Mark your design with landscape paint, flour, or spray paint.
6. Dig the creek bed twice as deep as it is wide. It's easiest to shovel the dirt from the middle to build up the sides of the banks.
7. Tap the soil down firmly several times until it is solid.
8. Line the channel and sides with landscape cloth. You can purchase landscape cloth in rolls that are 4 feet by 50 feet for about \$30 at hardware and garden centers. Attach the cloth to the dirt with inexpensive landscape pins, which cost about \$6 a bag.
9. Cover the cloth with pea gravel and/or sand. I use sand as a base, then gravel on top as it doesn't wash away easily.
10. Visit a local quarry, masonry supplier, or landscape center that carries rocks and boulders to choose the various sizes to add to your creek. You will need to walk around and decide on the color and types of rocks you want. Again, think natural looking.
11. Order gravel, sand, rounded river rocks, lava rocks, and boulders for delivery. There is normally a delivery charge, but check around.
12. Fill the channel and sides with the various sizes of rounded river rocks. Add a few boulders randomly throughout.



Lava rocks anchor this arroyo seco while river rocks, pebbles, and quartz add interest.

13. Finish the installation with the creek ending in a spillway of gravel and rocks that segue to your landscape naturally or if you have a pond, end your creek here.
14. Tuck reeds, grasses, bulbs, and flowers into crevices on the topsides and add whatever other plants fit your design and color desires.
15. If appropriate, add a flagstone bridge, or large stepping stones to walk across the stream.
16. Solar lights are a terrific enhancement for nightscaping.



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