



Outdoor Shower Build Checklist

This checklist is for readers who want a clear plan after finishing the article. It helps prevent the two biggest outdoor-shower headaches: bad drainage and freeze damage. Use it before buying materials, during the build, and again each season.

Before the build: Site, rules, and a realistic plan

- Confirm that the shower spot gets at least a few hours of direct sun. This helps the floor dry faster and cuts down on slippery algae.
- Check whether the area is at least 10 feet from the home's foundation to reduce splashback and seepage risk.
- Write down how the shower will be used most (pool rinse, pet wash, gardening cleanup). That choice drives height, privacy, and flooring.
- Make sure the water source is practical (hose bib, interior tie-in, or a dedicated line). Long runs add cost and reduce pressure.
- Check whether local rules treat soapy runoff as greywater that must stay on-site and away from storm drains.
- Confirm that the ground can handle runoff, or plan a dry well/French drain before any framing starts.

While you're building: Structure and plumbing that won't fight you later

- Mark the footprint and measure diagonals to confirm the layout is square before digging holes.
- Confirm that posts are set to the right depth for the local frost line if the build is permanent.
- Make sure fasteners match the environment (exterior-rated screws; corrosion-resistant hardware if humidity is high).
- Leave consistent gaps between floor boards so water drains instead of pooling underfoot.
- Check whether the privacy slats allow airflow. Too tight = trapped moisture and faster rot.
- Route supply lines with gentle bends and protected paths so they don't kink or get nicked by a shovel later.
- Test for leaks at every connection before closing any wall slats or trim.
- Confirm that the mixing valve and shower head height work for the main users (including kids if needed).



Drainage and safety: Keep the yard clean and the footing solid

- Make sure the base slopes slightly so water moves away from the standing area.
- Confirm that the drainage pit is deep enough and filled with clean gravel so runoff disappears quickly.
- Check whether the soil is clay-heavy; if it is, plan a larger dry well or a more defined drain path.
- Choose a non-slip surface (textured decking, river rock, or stable gravel) to avoid slick footing.
- Confirm that any soaps used are biodegradable if runoff will soak into planting areas.
- Keep electrical items (string lights, outlets, heaters) rated for outdoor/wet locations and placed away from direct spray.

Final checks and ongoing habits: Make it last through seasons

- Confirm that water shuts off cleanly at a valve inside the house if the line is hard-plumbed.
- Open the exterior valve and drain points during winterizing so no trapped water freezes in fittings.
- Blow out underground lines with compressed air if the climate regularly drops below freezing.
- Seal or oil wood on a set schedule (usually yearly) to slow UV damage and splintering.
- Clean the floor with a mild vinegar-and-water mix when it starts to feel slick.
- Keep a small “spares kit” (washers, thread tape, one extra fitting) so minor leaks don’t turn into a weekend project.