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HOW 'BOUT A DRAIN CHECK? HOW TO UNCLOG A SINK DRAIN



WHY IS MY SINK CLOGGED?

To help unclog a sink drain it helps to know the parts of sinks and how sinks work. Kitchen and bathroom sinks are similar. However, kitchen sinks are designed to be hooked up/connected to garbage disposals and dishwashers. There are many things that can cause a clogged sink. Use our tips below to learn how to unclog a sink.

Clogs in sinks can happen in different ways and it's important to clear a drain clog right away. How you unclog your sink will vary based on the sink style.

Before you take care of unclogging your sink, be aware of how your sink drain works. Bathroom sinks only involve a faucet and the drain, and most have a pop-up stopper that allows you to fill the sink with water. Bathroom sinks usually have a strainer or a stopper.

Most sinks also have a sink trap, often called a P-trap. A P-trap is the curved portion of pipe under the sink. It's supposed to create a seal by holding water, which prevents sewer gases from getting into the kitchen or bathroom. The P-trap traps water and creates a seal that blocks sewer gases from rising up through the sink drain.

To successfully unclog a sink, you'll need to know what kind of sink you have and the parts to it to help resolve the drain clog. For more information about cleaning sinks and drains, check out our article [Spring Plumbing Tips for Your Drains \(/diy-plumbing-tip/spring-plumbing-tips-for-your-drains/\)](#).



WHAT CAUSES A SINK NOT TO DRAIN?

If your bathroom sink isn't draining, it may be due to a buildup of hair, soap, toothpaste or other debris. Bathroom sinks tend to undergo heavy daily use, so dealing with a buildup or a clogged sink could be likely. A buildup of debris is also a common cause of bathtub drain clogs. It's best to know how to unclog both your sink and other bathroom clogs.

To clean debris from your sink stopper and strainers, use [Liquid-Plumr® Clog Destroyer Plus+ Pipeguard™ \(/drain-cleaners/clog-destroyer-pipeguard/\)](#), as directed to tackle tough sink drain clogs. And, you can use it regularly to help prevent future drain clogs.

Keep reading for tips on how to unclog sink drains and help prevent them from occurring. Learn more about [dealing with hair clogs \(/diy-plumbing-tip/how-to-deal-with-hair-clogs/\)](#) to help clogged drains.

HOW DO YOU UNCLOG A SINK DRAIN?

STEP 1:

If there is standing water in your kitchen or bathroom sink, you can start by bailing the sink before you work on unclogging the sink drain. Use a cup to scoop out the water in the sink and dump it into a bucket.

STEP 2:

After you've bailed out the water, remove the sink stoppers and strainers from the drain. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for doing this and their advice on how to unclog a sink drain. If you need to remove some screws, make sure they don't fall down the drain. And, if you need to remove stopper parts from under the sink, keep a bucket underneath the pipes.

STEP 3:

Remove the material causing the clogged sink from the stopper and strainer. Then, run the water to flush down any additional bits and test the drain flow.

If you follow this process and it doesn't fix the clogged sink, you'll need a powerful drain cleaner. Liquid-Plumr® Clog Destroyer Plus+ Pipeguard™ comes in a thick gel formula that works through the toughest drain clogs. Pour two cups (16 oz.) down the drain and wait 15 minutes. Then, flush the sink drain with hot water. Repeat the process if the sink remains clogged.



HOW DO YOU UNCLOG A SINK DRAIN NATURALLY?

You can try to unclog a sink naturally by using a combination of baking soda and vinegar. Follow these steps to unclog a sink drain:

STEP 1:

Pour a pot of boiling water down your drain.

STEP 2:

Pour a mixture of one cup of water and one cup of vinegar down the drain.

STEP 3:

Cover the drain with a plug and wait 5–10 minutes.

STEP 4:

Flush the sink drain with boiling water.

If your sink still drains slowly, or has a clog after trying the baking soda and vinegar method, try [Liquid-Plumr® Clog Destroyer Plus+ Foaming Clog Fighter™ \(/drain-cleaners/clog-destroyer-foaming-clog-fighter/\)](#).

For more information, check out our article about [how baking soda and vinegar work \(/diy-plumbing-tip/how-baking-soda-and-vinegar-cleans-drains/\)](#).

HOW DO YOU UNCLOG A SINK WITH A GARBAGE DISPOSAL?

If you have a kitchen sink with a garbage disposal that isn't draining and seems jammed, you can dislodge the debris that's clogging your drain by using a kitchen plunger. (Note: A kitchen plunger is different than a toilet plunger.) How to unclog the drain depends on if it's an issue with the sink or garbage disposal. Always check the

garbage disposal to resolve sink drains.

STEP 1:

To unclog a sink with a garbage disposal, plunge the drain, and tighten a clamp over the rubber part of the drain line to your dishwasher. This can be found under your sink.

STEP 2:

Place the plunger over the clogged sink drain and fill it with water (approx. 3–4 inches). Hold a wet rag over the adjacent drain and plunge vigorously for several minutes.

You can also fight especially persistent or tough garbage disposal clogs head-on with Liquid-Plumr® Clog Destroyer Plus+ Pipeguard™. The powerful formula cuts through standing water to unclog your garbage disposal, clear your drain walls, and deodorize your drain and can help with kitchen sink drain clogs.

Also, when you're working to unclog your garbage disposal, never put your hand down your kitchen sink drain in an effort to reach the clog or something else that may be stuck. If something like a piece of silverware falls in by accident, or any other foreign object, turn the disposal off and use tongs to retrieve the item.

If you have an [urgent plumbing problem \(/diy-plumbing-tip/how-to-know-youve-got-an-urgent-problem/\)](/diy-plumbing-tip/how-to-know-youve-got-an-urgent-problem/), or one that won't go away, you may need to [call a professional plumber \(/diy-plumbing-tip/how-to-know-when-to-leave-it-to-the-pros/\)](/diy-plumbing-tip/how-to-know-when-to-leave-it-to-the-pros/).

Learn more about how to use Liquid-Plumr® products on our [FAQs page \(/faq/\)](/faq/).

DO'S AND DON'TS

- **DO:** familiarize yourself with the way your particular sink drain works, and [know your pipes \(/diy-plumbing-tip/what-are-pipes-made-of/\)](/diy-plumbing-tip/what-are-pipes-made-of/).
- **DO:** snake your drain if you have a large clog.
- **DO:** call a plumber if you have severe or persistent drain clogs that snaking and other DIY methods can't fix. It may be a sign of a more serious problem.
- **DO:** pick up long hairs in the sink before they are flushed down the drain and contribute to clogs. Keep an old toothbrush handy for this task.
- **DON'T:** continue to add water in an effort to flush a fully clogged drain.
- **DON'T:** ignore your drain stopper or strainer. Remove them and clean them off, since tangled hair or debris can get caught and cause drain blockage.

READ MORE IN [USAGE \(/DIY-CATEGORIES/USAGE/\)](/diy-categories/usage/)

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