



Handywoman's Home Repairs

by Gloria Rae

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Always make safety of all involved your first criteria.

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Introduction

Women and home repair can mix! In fact, if you take away the heavy or super-awkward movements, women can do a whole lot of fixing.

You can have fun and save money, too.

It feels good and powerful to be able to do things for yourself.

I started learning how to fix things at a very young age. It seemed that, if I ever wanted anything done when I wanted it done, I had to do it myself. You know how long you can wait, don't you?

Years ago, I was pregnant. My kitchen sink was broken and my husband kept saying he was going to fix it. So, I'd haul the dishes to the bathtub with a dishpan. My back ached as you well can imagine. It was awkward and it made me angry.

But, I had been raised that women were to listen to their husbands.

Times have changed and so have I. After several months and me (with a new born daughter and a three year old) doing dishes with the dishpan in the bathtub, my husband fixed the sink in fifteen minutes.

It took him fifteen minutes to fix a sink that I could not use for five months! I was livid.

And so, my journey began. I not only learned the skills that I needed, but I made a small business out of painting apartment buildings, created an income and became independent.

You can learn how to do repairs too.

Using Tools

How to use a Hammer:

It may seem silly to think you need to know how to use a hammer. But, it’s the standard ‘blunt instrument’ so let’s learn about hammers and using them safely.

Tips:

First and foremost, choose the right hammer for the job.

Grip the hammer firmly by its handle.

Keep your wrist straight and use your whole forearm to lift and drop the tool.

Let the hammer do most of the work, using its weight to drive the nail.

How to Hammer in a Nail:

Grasp the hammer with its claw facing upward. Don’t choke up on the handle.

Hold your wrist stiff.

Your arm should be raised at 90 degrees at the elbow.

Take a few practice swings.

Gently tap a nail into the wood at 90 degrees (perpendicular).

Raise the hammer as described above and strike it confidently.

Repeat the process, adding force and velocity with each swing, until the nail is completely driven into the wood.

How to remove a nail:

Using the edge of one claw of the hammer, pry the head of the nail from the wood until it can be slid into the claw slot.

Place a piece of thin wood, at least 3/4-inch-by-3/4-inch, beneath the head of the hammer for additional leverage.

Jerk the nail out.

Safety tips:

These tips will help you get the work done but, if the work requires a specialist, then get in touch with one. No matter how small or big the task is, safety is a key issue.

Important: Keep it away from children.

Always wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from flying particles and dust. Even bystanders should wear safety goggles.

Consider earplugs as well.

All hammer blows should be struck squarely with the striking face of the hammer flat on the surface which is being struck.

Avoid glancing blows as well as over-and under-strikes.

When striking another tool, always use a hammer with a striking face that has a diameter approximately 3/8" larger than the other tool.

Never use one hammer to strike another hammer or hatchet.

Never use a tool with a loose or damaged handle.

Discard any striking tool if it shows dents, cracks, chips or excessive wear.

Never re-grind, weld or re-heat a treated hammer.

Replace loose or cracked handles before using the tool again.

Do not use the hammer handle for striking, and never use the hammer as a pry bar. This may cause the handle to split, which could result in it cutting or pinching the user.

Do not strike a hard steel surface with a steel hammer. Small pieces of steel could fly off and they may injure someone.

TIP: To hold a nail before hammering, push the teeth of a comb around the nail and let the comb hold the nail in place, protecting your fingers from a mis-strike.

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How to Use a Staple Gun

Here are some key tips about loading your staple gun:

Load the appropriate staples/nails before plugging in the staple gun.

Plug the staple gun into the main supply.

Hold the staple gun firmly with the staple track at 90 degrees to the work piece.

The safety trigger release button will be depressed when the staple track is pressed towards the work.

The staple gun will not operate unless the safety trigger release button is fully depressed.

Squeeze the trigger to drive the staple/nail into the work.

On hard surfaces, press down on the top of the handle with your free hand to hold the staple gun against the work.

Each squeeze of the trigger will drive one staple/nail only.

Remove the staple gun from the work and disconnect from the main supply when the work is finished.

Safety Instructions:

Keep the work area clean

Do not expose power tools to rain.

Do not use power tools in damp or wet locations.

Guard against electric shock.

Keep the staple gun and all supplies away from children.

Do not let visitors or children touch the tool or the extension lead.

Do not force the tool.

Use the right tool.

Remember: Check for Damaged Parts

Always check the tool properly before using it. If any part is damaged, get it repaired or replaced by an authorized service center or follow the instructions in the user guide or manual.

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How to Use a Handsaw

Mark a line where you will be cutting.

Support both sides of the work on a bench or sawhorse.

Take time to get comfortable before you start sawing.

Make sure that the teeth of your saw are sharp.

Line up your wrist, elbow and shoulder with the saw blade.

Remember that you will lose about 1/8-inch of wood with the cut due to the width of the blade, so cut on the outside of the line.

Apply slight pressure on the push strokes and relax when you pull the saw.

Saw with a steady, easy rhythm.

Keep in mind that the more acute the degree, the faster and rougher the cut.

Hold the saw at:

- 90-degrees for a quick, raw cut
- 45 degrees for smooth cuts; and
- 15 to 20 degrees for very fine cuts.

Tips:

Wear gloves for comfort and protection.

Wear goggles and a dust mask.

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How to Use a Paint Spray Machine

1] Rent or buy an airless spray machine.

2] Protect areas near the area that you are painting.

3] Spraying puts a lot of fine paint droplets into the air, so cover everything in the area that you don’t want to get paint on.

4] Seal the area if you're working inside. Do not use the sprayer outside on a windy day.

5] Pour paint in a bucket through a strainer to ensure that there are no lumps or any bits of non-paint material.

6] Thin the paint (if required) as per the manufacturer's instructions.

7] Cover yourself well; wear long-sleeved shirts and gloves.

8] Start at a corner, work from the top down and keep your strokes steady and smooth. Remember that it is better to paint several light coats than one heavy one.

9] Do not to create "columns" of paint while spraying.

Tips:

There are basically three kinds of sprayers: airless, compressed air, and electric pump available in the market.

Get instructions specific to your machine from the dealer, as paint sprayers can be difficult to operate.

The nozzles of the sprayer are prone to clogging, so you have to know how clear them properly.

Make sure the equipment is clean.

If you are using latex paint, make sure your sprayer is compatible or you may ruin the appliance.

Safety Tips:

If you are painting in a room with appliances such as water heaters, air conditioners, or furnaces, turn them all off!

Don't hold the spray gun close to your body - it may harm you.

Never try to unclog a nozzle while it's running.

Wear a respirator/mask.

Make sure that children are not present in the room.

Wear goggles for eye protection.

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How to Use a Power Drill

The cord of the appliance should be long enough that you can use the machine far from the electrical outlet without any worries.

Always uncoil the electric cord of any appliance before starting to use it.

Always ensure that there is no chance that you can touch the cord with the appliance or tool.

Open the chuck of the drill with the help of the chuck key that comes with it. Do this by pushing the notched end of the key into a hole along the chuck and twisting it counter-clockwise.

Insert the drill bit into the chuck and tighten it with the chuck key, turning it clockwise this time. Be sure it fits securely.

Plug the drill in to the electric socket.

Press the trigger to make sure everything is fine and in good condition, before you make contact with the work.

Start the work at a slow pace and steadily increase the pressure.

Maintain the pressure on the drill and the trigger until the hole is completed.

As soon you finish the work, stop drilling.

Depending on the type of work, you can use different attachments such as a disk sander, a buffer pad, a hole saw, a bit extender etc., to make the job easier.

Key Tips:

If you want to drill a hole of a certain depth, mark the measurement on the drill with a piece of colored electrical tape.

Use cutting oil while drilling metals.

Safety tips:

Wear safety goggles

Tie your hair if it’s long

Fold up and secure loose sleeves

Keep all tools away from children

Wear gloves.

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How to Use a Caulking Gun

Clean the area to be caulked; remove dirt, loose paint and old caulk.

Make sure the area is dry before you begin.

Load a tube of caulk into a caulking gun and make sure it's well sealed at both ends.

Use a utility knife to cut the tip of the spout. Cut off as little as possible, taking into consideration the size of the 'bead' of caulk you need.

If the caulk comes in a cardboard tube, look for a second seal at the base of the spout. Insert a nail or an awl through the spout to puncture the seal.

Remember that plastic tubes don't usually have a second, inner seal.

Hold the gun at a slight angle. If you're filling a crack, insert the spout if you can - otherwise, run it at the surface.

Pull away from the bead slightly as you squeeze out the caulk, rather than push into it - that can be very messy.

Use the right amount of caulk for the job.

Use your finger to gently press the caulk into corners or cracks.

Use a damp towel or rag to clean off most of the excess caulk, and then use a dry one to clean off the rest.

Tips:

Different types of caulk (silicone, acrylic and latex) are available. Silicone caulk is the long-lasting one, but it does not take paint well.

Wear gloves if required.

Keep some water handy to wash off.

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How to Safely Use a Ladder

First and foremost, fully open the stepladder and lock the braces.

If you use a regular ladder, then make sure it's not broken.

Keep the feet of the ladder, particularly of an extension ladder, on dry and even surfaces.

Never use an aluminum ladder near live electrical sources.

Climb only as high as the ladder is designed for. Never climb past the point where your hips are level with the top of the ladder.

Hold on to the sides of the ladder as you climb. Store tools in back pockets or a tool belt.

Never allow more than one person on a ladder at the same time.

Don't let anyone stand below the ladder.

Read all warnings and cautions from the manufacturer of the ladder. Instructions can be found on yellow or orange safety labels on the side of the ladder.

Important:

Store your ladder where it is not exposed to moisture or extreme heat.

Safety Tips

Wear gloves

Keep it away from children

Make sure that the ladder is not broken

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How to Use a Wrench

Always use good quality tools and inspect them for defects before using them.

Replace worn or defective tools.

Maintain your tools. Make sure that the teeth of a pipe wrench are clean and sharp. Worn or greasy jaws are more likely to slip.

Check the pipe or fitting. Is it clean and oil-free? Slippage can cause you serious injury.

Always keep your wrist straight when using a wrench.

Be sure that the opening of the wrench is in full contact with the bolt or nut before you apply pressure.

Pull, don't push, and use a slow, steady motion.

Don't stick a piece of pipe on the end of the wrench to improve leverage. It is not safe

Important Tips:

Keep your tools away from extreme heat, which can expand the metal and cause dangerous structural problems.

Protect yourself from losing your balance if the wrench slips or a bolt breaks. Stand on a solid surface with both feet planted firmly on the floor and don't lean in to the work.

Never use a wrench on moving machinery.

Keep it away from children

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Structural Repairs

How to Restore a Wooden Floor

Note: If your wood floors are pre-finished, always consult the manufacturer for safety and other key tips before attempting any of these procedures.

1] Prepare the room

Move all your furniture and all wall decorations out of the room.

Install a box fan or a standing fan within the room for ventilation and open all windows. This is to blow away all the negative pressure and the dust out from the room.

If some furniture is still near or in the room, then cover it with some drop cloths or old bed sheets.

2] Shield the floor

Install an abrasive pad on the rubberized wheel of a floor polisher.

Practice a little bit in the center of the room until you are comfortable controlling the machine.

Install a 100-grit abrasive screen on the polisher and sand the floor.

Go back and forth across the floor in overlapping passes from one end of the room to the other.

Sweep and vacuum the floor. At this stage, the finish should be dull and wear patterns should no longer be noticeable; any scratches and stains should be gone.

Repeat the sanding as necessary.

Using an electric sander, sand the perimeter. Use a rubber-sanding block with fine sandpaper or a sanding sponge, sanding with the grain, for areas where your electric sander can't be used.

3] Remove all dust

Sweep, vacuum and clean the room (floors, walls, baseboards) to remove all the dust.

Use a soft cloth, slightly dampened with mineral spirits to wipe down the entire floor.

4] Apply the finish

For the final finish, use a professional-quality angled sash brush along the baseboard.

You can use a professional-quality varnish brush, 5 inches (13 cm) wide, to apply an even coat of finish.

Tips:

For kitchen areas, place small, washable rugs in front of the stove, sink and refrigerator. In this way, any spills won't cause much damage your floor.

Remember to wipe up spills immediately with a dry cloth or paper towel. Use a slightly damp mop or cloth, if necessary, but dry the floor immediately.

Keep dirt, especially gritty sand, out of the house. Choose exterior mats that are effective at removing dirt from people's shoes etc.

Set up a convenient place for people to slip off dirty or wet shoes to safeguard the floor.

Protect wooden floors from excessive sunlight, which can cause its color to fade away.

Install and frequently clean fabric glides on the legs of chairs, tables and other furniture.

Safety tips

Don't walk bare-foot on a sanded floor.

Wear a tight-fitting dust mask or respirator.

Follow all safety guidelines recommended by the manufacturer.

Keep the material/solvents away from children.

Wear gloves.

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How to fix a hole in the Wall

This list shows tools and materials that you may require for this work, depending on the nature and location. You may not require all this material, but it’s better to keep things handy, rather than have a last-moment rush to get it from the store.

Material Required:

- Drywall (one foot wide by two feet long)
- Handsaw
- Pencil
- Hammer
- Finishing nails
- Newspaper
- Fine wire, about one foot long
- Wire cutters

- Tape measure or ruler
- Work gloves
- Putty knife
- Utility knife
- Construction adhesive
- Joint compound
- Fine sandpaper
- A paint brush
- Primer paint

To fix a small hole:

For a small hole or dent, less than an inch, just follow these easy steps to fix it:

Stuff some newspaper into the hole to provide a backing.

Fill the remaining hole with joint compound, which is basically gypsum-based mud. Apply it with the putty knife, and smooth it down as best as you can. By the next day, the compound will have congealed into a hard, white patch. You can then lightly sand it, and your repair is done

Remember that holes left when nails, screws or anchors are removed, can be patched simply by pushing joint compound into the hole. After the compound has dried, sand it smooth and paint over it.

To fix a Large Hole

Use the handsaw or the utility knife to cut the hole into a square shape so that it's easier to patch.

Remove the discarded drywall fragments.

Measure the hole with the a measuring tape or ruler, and write down the measurements. Then, mark out the size of the patch that you will require to fill the hole.

Use the handsaw to cut out the patch, making it just a little bigger than the hole.

Test the patch against the hole. Make sure it fits well. If it is too large, then carefully scrape down the edges with a utility knife until it fits snugly.

Then, hammer a finishing nail through the center of the patch. Remove the nail and thread the wire through the hole. Make a loop in one end of the wire and tie a knot in the other end. The knot must be large enough to stop the end of the wire slipping through the hole.

Stuff the hole with wadded newspaper to provide some backing.

After that, coat the edges of both the hole and the patch with construction adhesive (wear gloves for this).

Slide the patch into the hole while avoiding the sticky glued edges. Make sure the front face of the patch is flush with the edge of the wall.

If you push the patch in a bit too far, you can use the attached wire to pull it back out.

When the patch is placed to your satisfaction, wipe away the excess glue and let it set overnight.

The next day, use wire cutters to snip off the wire. If a bit still protrudes, use your pencil or a pen to push it back into the wall.

Using the putty knife, smooth the entire patched area, including a small area around the patch, with the joint compound. Smooth it down a bit and let it dry overnight.

Use sandpaper to sand the patched area smooth. If you do this properly, the patched area will blend with the wall. However, be careful while you are doing this.

Once you finish sanding, paint the patched area with primer and let it to dry thoroughly.

After this entire process, paint or paper the patched area to match the rest of your wall.

Safety Tips

Wear Gloves.

Wear Safety Goggles.

Keep tools away from Children.

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How to Prepare a Room for Painting

Painting a room is not easy, but it’s not that difficult either.

Careful preparation brings good results. You should prepare yourself and plan in advance to achieve the desired result from painting a room.

Things to do before you start painting:

Remove the furniture, move all that you can. Place the rest of the stuff at the center of the room. Make sure you cover it with drop cloths or old bed sheets.

After moving the furniture, use removable ‘safety masking tape’ around doors and windows, and cover your floor with old bed sheets or drop cloths to protect the floors.

Cover the smoke detector with a plastic bag or a cloth.

Consult your hardware store or a specialist to learn what kind of paint will look best on your wall.

Plan on three coats: one coat of primer and two finishing coats. Always use primer on patched and unpainted surfaces - raw surfaces suck up paint like a sponge.

Before painting, make sure there is adequate ventilation in the room.

Clean the walls and ceilings. Use a stain-blocking primer to cover the dark marks, if required.

If walls or ceilings have water stains or other serious discoloration, then it may be necessary, before painting, to coat them with a latex or oil-based stain-blocking primer to prevent the stains from bleeding through the new paint.

Sand or scrape away all loose and flaky paint from the walls.

Using a putty knife, fill all nail holes and screw holes with spackling compound. Fill cracks with caulk or putty.

For serious repairs, use drywall-taping techniques and use epoxy filler on woodwork. Use the sandpaper to sand it down until it matches the area around it.

Wash all surfaces with TSP (trisodium phosphate) to remove grease and dirt. Use paint de-glosser for glossy surfaces. (This is not all that is necessary unless the walls are just filled with grease.)

Rinse everything well with water to remove the TSP. Allow the surface to dry thoroughly, and then dust and vacuum if needed.

Remove all cover plates from all electrical fixtures, outlets and switches. (Removing a cover plate is easy. Just get a screw driver and unscrew. The way to remember the way to turn the screw is: **Righty** Tighty and **Lefty** Loosey.)

Place small bits of masking tape over switch handles and outlets to protect them from paint.

Leave the power off as you paint the room. Check twice before turning the power back on. It’s something I advise against but, if you decide to turn the power back on before finishing the painting, work *very* carefully around the electrical areas.

Wear old and comfortable clothes; choose slip-on shoes, as it is easy to remove them. Cover your hair with a scarf or hat when using a roller or painting the ceiling. Keep a square of plastic-wrap on hand to cover your eyeglasses when painting a ceiling.

TIP: When using a hand brush and reaching high with it, use a coffee filter. Put a coffee filter over the handle creating a cup to catch dripping paint ☺

Remember - good paint performance depends on good paint adhesion, and paint adheres best to surfaces that are clean and dry.

Before picking up a brush or roller, it's important to make sure whether or not the surface is good for painting.

Never paint on wallpaper.

Good paints won't spatter or show brush marks. And, since they hide better than ordinary paints, a single coat is often sufficient to give a great-looking paint job.

Top quality interior paints are also tougher and more durable than ordinary interior paints.

The key to painting well is to start off from the ceiling and then gradually go on to the walls.

Start by painting the corners with a 2-inch or 3-inch paint brush. Use the same brush to outline where the ceiling meets the wall, around doors and windows, above the baseboard and around any other trim or detailing - where a paint roller won't go.

After that, pour some paint on to the roller pan and roll over the ceiling, then the walls. Remember to only pour small amounts of paint into your roller pan each time.

Try to start rolling before the brushed-on paint has had time to dry, so that the rolled-on paint will blend in rather than become a second coat.

Rolling out a W, about 3 feet wide, and then filling it in, assures an even application of paint.

Paint from dry areas into wet as it will reduce ‘ridges’ in the paint.

Cover cans or buckets when you're not using them.

Keep a rag and brush handy to deal with drips, spills and the general messiness of the process.

If a drip becomes too dry to spread out, let it dry. Come back later, sand it and paint over it.

If you are going to do cupboard doors and baseboards on an old house, it is best not to remove them.

- When you remove the doors, it is hard to line them up and get them to shut properly again.
- When you remove the baseboards, they break and splinter.

Tip for the baseboard. Fill the old edge with putty, then sand it. You will have a lovely edge to paint and no-one will ever know that you did not take the baseboard off and sand it. It saves time, and it saves a lot of headaches.

Tools and Materials to Paint a Room

Requirements for Painting a Room

Primer

Natural or synthetic paintbrushes (Use a 2 1/2-inch brush for edge work)

Paint tray and liner

Roller handle

Roller sleeves

Paint

Rags

Ladders

Masking tape (wide) or blue painter’s tape

Single-edge razor blades (to clean paint from window glass)

Screwdriver

I have a paintbrush in one hand and a damp rag in the other when I paint. If I miss an edge, I quickly wipe it up as I go along with the damp rag. It saves a lot of time when you work in this fashion.

These tips will help you to paint the room well. After painting the room, if you are not satisfied with the results, then get an expert to help you out. Remember to read and follow the instructions given on the paint cans and other tools to achieve the best result.

Safety Tips:

Wear Gloves.

Make sure the area is properly ventilated.

Keep all paint away from children.

Paints are toxic and combustible, so store them appropriately in a safe area.

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How to Apply Paste to Wallpaper

Nowadays, most wallpaper comes with the back pre-pasted. But, sometimes, you find some that are not pre-pasted. My grandfather was a wallpaper hanger and had great pride in his ability to hang wallpaper.

Get the correct adhesive paste for the job. Some papers, such as vinyl, require a specific glue paste.

Mix powdered wallpaper paste in a separate bucket before pouring it in to the pasting bucket or roller tray.

Stir them well with a stirring stick or any other tool and make sure that you remove all the lumps, but don’t mix it too long - you may put air into the mix.

Pour this liquid adhesive directly into a bucket or roller tray.

Lay a strip of wallpaper - already cut to size, pattern side down - on a long, flat, dry table. Let one end of the paper flop over the edge of the table.

Use a paste brush or a paint roller to apply the paste to the half of the paper that remains flat on the table, make sure you cover the whole section.

Fold the section you just pasted over on to itself and slide the dry section of the paper on to the table.

Apply the paste.

Fold the next section on to itself and then fold the two halves against each other, being very careful not to crease the paper.

This process is called 'booking.' Booking keeps the paper moist, and prevents the paste from falling onto the floor.

Set the paper aside in a clean spot for 5 minutes then hang it on the wall

Tips:

Let the paper set after applying paste.

This process allows the paper to expand or shrink before you lay it on the wall.

As soon as each strip of wallpaper is booked and set aside, use a clean, wet sponge to clean the table.

Wear gloves if needed.

Keep solvent away from children.

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How to Repair a Ceramic Tile Floor

Visit a local flooring supply store or home-improvement store to find a tile to match and replace the damaged tile.

Take the cracked or damaged tile with you to get the closest possible match of style and color in the replacement tile.

Get some adhesive and grout mix for the job.

To remove the existing tile, scrape out the grout from the joints around the tile with a grout saw.

Break up the old tile or the cracked tile with a hammer or a chisel. Then, remove all the pieces from under the edge of the piece.

Remove the tile pieces and then scrape out the old adhesive with a putty knife or paint scraper so that you have a smooth level surface for the new tile.

Be very careful to not damage the surrounding tiles.

Make sure the floor beneath the tile is structurally sound. Correct any squeaks or loose flooring.

Spread adhesive on to the back of the new tile with a notched trowel or putty knife.

Scrape off any extra adhesive.

Press the tile firmly into place so it's level with the surrounding tiles. Let the adhesive set overnight, or as directed by the instructions for the type of glue or adhesive that you use.

Grout and seal the joints. You can use a fingertip or squeegee to apply the grout. Use sanded grout for floor tiles or tiles with wide joints, and un-sanded grout for wall tiles.

Let the grout set for 15 minutes.

Sponge excess grout and smooth joints.

Let the tile dry for 24 hours.

Grout can now be coated with clear waterproof grout sealer, which helps to prevent staining, mildew and rot.

Tips:

When hammering or removing the damaged tile, avoid hammering too hard or you may damage the substrate, crack the grout or even damage the adjoining tiles.

Clean up any excess grout before the tile dries.

Purchase a few extra tiles (it will help you if you break a tile while working)

Safety Tips:

Wear goggles for eye protection.

Wear Gloves to protect your hands.

Keep tools away from children.

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How to Install a Doorstop

First, decide on the type of doorstop that you want to install.

Some doorstops that are available on the market have a wall-mounted rubber stop that cushions the impact of the door handle.

Some are spring-loaded or solid-shaft stops that mount to the baseboard.

After you have purchased the doorstop, mark the exact spot where the doorknob comes in contact with the wall if you're using the wall-mounted type.

Attach the stop to the wall using the supplied screw.

Locate and mark a spot on the baseboard about two inches from the swinging edge of the door if you're using a baseboard-mounted doorstop.

Then, either screw the shaft of the stop directly into the wall from its own base, or use separate screws to attach it to the baseboard.

Safety Tips:

Wear Gloves to protect your hands

Use the right tools

Wear eye protection if there is even the slightest risk

Keep tools and other materials away from children

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How to Install a Peephole

Measure the point on the door where you require the peephole.

Drill a hole in the door at eye-level.

Make sure that you drill the hole which you drill to the diameter specified by the manufacturer of the peephole.

Insert the viewer sleeve (the part with the bubble) from the outside of the door.

Screw the other half of the viewer into the sleeve from the inside of the door.

You have a peephole installed.

Safety Tips:

Wear gloves.

If needed, wear goggles.

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Fixing the Fixtures

How to Change Glass in a Window

Be careful

Pull all the broken pieces of glass out of the window. Use needle-nosed pliers, if necessary, to remove the small pieces.

You may need to break some of the remaining glass in order to remove it. Use masking tape to hold the glass together while you break it and to keep the pieces from scattering as you remove it.

Use the putty knife to carefully scrape the old glazing compound (putty) from around the window.

Remove the old putty so that the new putty will adhere properly. If the old putty is brittle, soften it with mineral spirits, then remove it.

Remove the old glazing points using your needle-nosed pliers.

Put a thin bead of glazing compound around the window, pressing it into place with the putty knife.

Set the glass in place, anchoring it in the bead of glazing compound.

Use the putty knife to press glazing points in place around the pane every few inches.

Roll out a long, thin "string" of glazing compound and use it to seal the new windowpane in place. Smooth it down with the putty knife.

Clean any excess glazing compound from the glass.

When the new compound has dried according to manufacturer's instructions, prime it and paint it.

Overlap the paint onto the glass a fraction of an inch to create a good seal.

Wear Gloves for protection

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How to Change a Light bulb

Turn off the lamp or light fixture

If the bulb is hot, let it cool before you touch it.

Hold the bulb lightly but firmly and turn it counter clockwise until it is released from its socket.

Insert a replacement bulb lightly but firmly into the socket, and turn it clockwise until it locks in place.

Switch on the light to check whether it’s working or not.

Dispose of the used bulb.

If the old bulb is broken, make sure the electricity is turned off.

Push a soft bar of soap into the broken glass, and then twist.

Be very careful.

Important:

Check the wattage on the used bulb and replace it with a bulb of the same wattage.

Safety Tip:

Dispose the used bulb safely.

Keep it away from children

Wear gloves if necessary.

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Toilets

How to fix a partial flush in the toilet.

One of the things in a house that always requires constant checking is the toilet area. If you find yourself in a situation wherein your toilet only provides a partial flush, then it’s time to fix it.

First and foremost, check the water level in the tank; the water level mark is usually at the side of the tank or near the top of the overflow pipe.

If the water level is low, adjust the water or the float by bending its rod or resetting the adjustment screw.

Pour about 2 or 3 gallons of water directly into the bowl. If it flushes well, it means that the drain and vent are possibly clear.

Check the flapper valve or the tank balls that release water from the tank to the bowl. Watch its full operation and make sure it's opening fully and staying open until all the water is out of the tank.

If you have any doubts, then hold the valve open with your hand and then watch the flushing action.

Check for a jet flush hole in the front edge of the toilet trap. If there is one, it should be free of deposits. Use an acid cleaner and a stick if necessary to clear the opening.

There are few toilets that have small holes under the toilet bowl rim to release water to the bowl. If these holes are plugged, clean them with a toothpick or a hairpin.

You can buy an acid cleaner from a plumbing supply store to clean this chamber and holes. Allow the acid to sit for a length of time to dissolve deposits. Remember to follow the instructions carefully as given on the acid cleaner.

Finally, if the problem still persists, then it means that the problem is at the toilet trap or sewer system. For this you will need a plunger or an auger to fix it.

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How to remove a toilet blockage

To clean a plugged toilet, first bail out enough water to prevent overflowing.

Clear and remove any visible blockage by using a toilet plunger.

Place the plunger over the large opening in the bottom of the bowl and pump about ten times.

Remove the plunger. If water rushes out, it means that the blockage is cleared.

If the plunger fails, try an auger.

Twist the auger into the toilet; try to break through the blockage.

A bent coat hanger can also do the trick (will remove some objects).

Remember chemical cleaners at times are not that effective for toilet bowl blockage.

Cleaners usually can't reach the blockage, and they complicate the process further.

If your problem still persists, then call for professional help.

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How to fix the whistling sound from the Toilet

Whistling sounds in a plumbing system are usually caused when water flows through a restricted supply line. This can occur at the shut-off valve at the wall below the tank or at the fill valve inside the tank.

First check the supply, make sure that shut-off valve is fully open. Then take off the tank cover.

Flush the toilet and listen to each of these valves to locate the noise.

You may feel a vibration when you touch the valve. If you can locate the source, work on that valve.

Debris, rust, or mineral deposits caught in small passageways restrict water flow and can cause noise, thus remove them.

If the noise seems to be coming from the shut-off valve, open and close it several times.

This may clear debris. Leave the valve open. Flush again. If the whistle remains, you may need to dismantle this valve and look for obstructions.

If you suspect that the noise comes from the fill valve inside the tank, check for obstructions.

In the tank, dismantle the top of the fill valve where the float arm is attached.

Clean and re-assemble it (it may provide the solution) .

Wear Gloves

If needed wear eye goggles

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How to fix a toilet leak

First and foremost, you have to tighten all the connections. If the leak persists, then find the leak's source by drying everything with a towel or an old cloth. Then search for where the water is leaking out. The two mechanisms that operate simultaneously when a toilet is flushed are known as a flush valve and a fill (ball cock) valve. [Back to the Index](#)

For leaks at the Fill Valve

Turn off the water supply to the toilet; flush out all the water in the tank and sponge out the remaining water.

Use a wrench to disconnect the supply-tube-coupling nut and remove the fill valve's mounting nut.

Lift out the fill valve to clean the gasket and washer. If either one of them is damaged or dried out, replace it.

Reseat the valve, carefully centering it in the hole and holding it vertical as you tighten the mounting nut about a half turn past the point of full contact.

Reinstall the water-supply tube and turn on the water to test it. If necessary, tighten the mounting nut a little more [Back to the Index](#)

For leaks at the flush valve

Drain the tank and supply-tube coupling as described earlier. Remove the tank's mounting bolts using a large standard screwdriver on the bolt.

Use other tools, if required.

Lift off the tank.

With the tank upside down, pull or twist off the rubber spud washer and use a spud wrench to unscrew the large locking nut from the flush valve.

Lay the tank on its side and remove the flush valve.

Remove the beveled cone washer from the flush valve. Clean it and the spud washer with a soapy sponge (or replace them if they are in poor condition).

Reverse the procedure to reinstall the tank. Make sure the beveled side of the cone washer is facing the tank's inside and the beveled side of the spud washer is facing the bowl.

Tips:

Leaks that appear to come from either the fill valve or the flush valve may actually be passing through hairline tank cracks at those locations. If so, you need to replace the tank.

When you remove the tank to work on it, place it on a bath mat or similar padding to protect both the flooring and the tank.

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How to unclog a toilet

Using a plunger:

If the bowl is full or overflowing, use a disposable plastic container to take out half of the water.

If the bowl is empty, then add water to it.

Place the plunger firmly over the larger drain opening and move it up and down rapidly several times. If the water goes down the drain, you have probably removed the blockage.

Use the plunger again to be sure the water is running freely.

Then, pour in a pail of water and plunge one more time before flushing the toilet to refill the bowl.

If the blockage still remains after plunging, then it’s time to use an auger.

Using an auger:

Determine the direction in which to guide the auger.

Feed the curved tip of the auger into the drain opening. Crank clockwise and push with moderate pressure until the auger tightens up.

Then crank in the other direction. When the auger tightens again, reverse the direction until the auger is deep inside the drain.

Pull the handle up and out to remove the auger. If it jams, push gently, then pull again. You may have to turn the handle as you pull up.

Using an auger may either push the blockage through or pull it up in the bowl. After using the auger, remove any large pieces, wearing rubber gloves.

Finish with a plunger to ensure that the drain runs freely.

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Clear a Blocked Showerhead.

If you have a clogged showerhead (not brass because the vinegar would damage the brass finish), fill a plastic bag with vinegar.

Tie the plastic bag to the showerhead so that the head can soak in the vinegar overnight.

In the morning, rinse the showerhead. It should be clean and working great.

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How to Unclog a Sprinkler System

Turn off the sprinkler system and remove all the nozzles and heads.

Turn on the water and let it run until a solid, clean stream flows from each head opening. Then turn the water off.

Dismantle each nozzle according to the directions in your owner's manual.

Hold the nozzle under a faucet or hose to blast out debris. Open small, clogged holes using a piece of wire or a paper clip.

Rinse out the filter basket or screen.

Reassemble and replace the heads and nozzles.

Then turn on the water.

Remember:

To dismantle some nozzles, you'll need a screwdriver or a special key that comes with the whole system. Some other sprinklers can be taken apart by hand. [Back to the Index](#)

How to open a clogged drain

How to fix a clogged drain? Or, how to fix a clogged sink? These are among the most common problems; almost everyone has faced this situation.

Before you call your plumber to fix the problem, try to fix it yourself with these easy steps.

Remember a simple suction cup can often open a clogged sink drain.

If not, then first remove the basket strainer from the drain. Run (preferably) hot water until it stands about 2" deep in the sink.

Take a suction cup plunger and pump up and down directly over the clogged drain. The water in the sink provides a seal.

If the suction cup does not clear the drain in a few minutes, you will probably have to remove some of the pipes to get the job done.

If you cannot open the drain with the suction cup, set a vessel underneath the sink trap and remove the clean out plug and washer.

If the drain is only slightly clogged, a few quick probes with a screwdriver may solve the problem. If the drain is still clogged, then proceed further.

A drain auger works best.

The drain auger can be inserted deeply into the pipe.

After the drainpipe is opened, replace the clean out plug and washer.

Run hot water through the pipe to remove any dirt, or other accumulations present.

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How to Replace a Light Switch

Turn off the power at the main circuit breaker or fuse box.

Test by flipping the switch on to make sure the power is off.

Remove the screws holding the cover plate with a screwdriver and take the plate off.

Remove the screws holding the switch inside the electrical box.

Pull the switch out of the wall. The switch should come out a few inches, exposing the wires.

Remove the screws holding the two wires coming out of the wall to the switch.

Make sure to tag the wires so that you know which came from which screw and which place (they are usually color-coded).

Buy the same kind of switch from the hardware store. If you want to place a new style switch, it should be of the same size, so that it can fit in the same place with ease.

Attach the wires to the screws on the switch in accord with your earlier tags or marks.

Secure the new switch in the box with mounting screws.

Replace the switch cover.

Test your work; turn on the switch to check whether it works properly.

Things to Remember:

Marking which wire came from which screw prevents dangerous wiring mix-ups.

Purchase a tester. It will help you.

Follow the instructions carefully.

If you don’t achieve the desired result, then get in touch with an expert.

Safety Tips:

Wear Gloves.

Use the right tools.

Protect yourself from shocks of any kind.

Keep the tools away from children.

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How to Paint a Window Frame

Painting around a window requires some skill and understanding of the whole process. But, it’s not that difficult. Just follow these steps to get the desired result.

Tape all the parts near or over the window frame that are not supposed to be painted, such as catches, hinges, etc.

Clean the glass before you paint the frame to keep dust and grime from getting into the paint.

Tape off the window, leaving a small gap between the frame and the glass.

Begin with the horizontal crosspieces, then do the top and bottom horizontal pieces.

Later on, paint the vertical crosspieces if there are any.

Paint the window molding (if required).

Peel the tape off the glass when the paint is nearly dry to touch, but don't wait until it's completely dry.

The tape may pull the paint up with it if it's too dry.

Remove any accidental drips on the glass with a paint scraper.

Important points to remember:

Follow the instructions carefully

Keep paint and other solvents away from children

Wear gloves to protect your hands

Wear an eye protector if needed

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How to Repair a Sliding Door

The most common problem with sliding doors is they stick and don’t move freely.

Follow these tips to solve your problem.

Check the floor track for dirt, leaves, pebbles, mildew or other junk that can obstruct the rollers.

Also, look for dents or dings that may cause the door to stick.

Squirt a little bit of powdered graphite into the rollers, to lubricate them.

Rub a block of paraffin along the tracks.

Check the alignment of the latch if it's not catching properly.

Loosen the screws and align the mount properly with the latch.

Check the weather stripping. Pressure-sensitive or stick-on weather stripping can be applied around a draughty sliding door.

Tips:

Clean the frame with a rag dipped in denatured alcohol before applying weather stripping.

Wear gloves while performing the activity.

Vacuum the track periodically with your vacuum cleaner’s hose attachment

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Furniture Repairs

How to Repair a Wobbly Chair or Table

Wooden Chairs

Place the chair upside down on top of a plastic sheet or a drop cloth.

Carefully measure the length of each leg to determine the particular leg that may be the reason for the wobble.

On the other three legs, make a pencil mark at the same length as the wobbly one.

Gently sand each of the longer three legs until you reach the pencil mark, starting with coarse (80-grit) sandpaper and ending with fine (220-grit) sandpaper.

Sand the chair outdoors so that the dust particles won’t spoil your home.

Metal Chairs

If the chair has metal, cork or plastic glides, check to make sure no glide is missing. If a glide is missing, buy a replacement one at a hardware store. Glides are small disks used to protect floors from furniture.

Other Tips

If one chair leg is shorter than the other three, then place a glide on the shorter leg to make up the difference instead of sanding down the other three legs.

Examine the chair joints - a loose one will cause the chair to wobble. Reinforce a loose joint with wood glue

Once the work is done, make sure that you touch-up the portion with matching paint.

Wear gloves while working.

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How to caulk a bathtub

There are times when you would find yourself in a scenario wherein the joint between the tub and the wall of your toilet has opened up. And there is leakage. Thus it's time to do the process of caulking around the bathtub.

Firstly, remove all loose material from the bathtub area and clean the area with rubbing alcohol.

Then, remove the old caulk, either by softening it with a heat gun or by scraping out the old caulk with a sharp putty knife.

If that doesn't work, then use a hammer and a chisel.

You can also use a solvent called the ‘Caulk Remover’ from any local hardware store or home improvement store. Follow the supplied instructions.

After a couple of hours, the loosened caulk can be removed with a putty knife. If the caulk still remains firm, then you may want to carefully use a safety razor to remove it.

After that, clean the surface with water and allow it to dry.

Then, caulk the joint again with a flexible silicone- or urethane-based caulk. You can even purchase special bathtub caulks now. These caulks resist water and mildew, and they remain flexible to allow for movement.

Be sure to pick a color that matches the adhesive which you use.

It is a good idea to fill the tub with water before you replace the caulk. A tub always moves with the weight of the water so, if there is water, you will be filling the joint when

it's forced open and it will accommodate more movement when the tub is filled in the future.

After the caulk has partially cured or placed, drain the water.

Discard the excess caulk and then use a damp rag or cloth to carefully remove any caulk that has got on to the porcelain or tile surfaces. At this point, the caulk is moist enough to be wiped up easily.

If you want to, you can repeat this process for the other interior seams also. If necessary, caulk the exterior seams between the floor and the top of the tub for extra protection.

If the caulk still seems a bit uneven after the whole process, then you can drag a wet finger across it before it dries. This will help to smooth it out.

Allow the caulk to lay/stay for at least a day (preferably longer) before using the bathtub.

Safety tips to keep in mind:

Keep your hands protected (wear gloves)

Keep tools and other solvents away from children

Wear eye protection if you have to chisel out the old caulk

Make sure that you follow all the instructions properly

Important:

Make sure that you understand the whole process before you start. If you are not comfortable with any step or process, don't do the project. If you find yourself stuck at any moment, call for help - preferably a plumber or an expert in the same field.

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How to Change a Door knob

Give your door a new look - installing a new doorknob is easy. Remember that almost all door mechanisms are interchangeable.

Detach the trim (the ring of metal between both doorknobs and the door) by removing the screws that hold it. Sometimes the trim has to be gently pried off rather than unscrewed.

Remove all the screws under the trim. There are long screws that are attached at the doorknobs on either side of the door.

Pull the doorknobs apart and remove them from the door

Remove the screws that hold the bolt (the locking mechanism), which remains attached to the door, and extract the bolt.

Look at the metal strike plate attached to the frame around the door (this is what catches the bolt). If the strike plate is not loose and is the right color, leave it there. Otherwise, detach it from the doorjamb by removing its screws.

Insert the new bolt into the door and screw it into place. Remember to face the slanted side toward the direction the door closes in.

Place a trim piece between one new doorknob and the door, and insert the doorknob. The mechanism of the new doorknob should be the same.

Insert the other doorknob and trim piece on the other side of the door, making sure the two are aligned so that the long screws can hold them together.

Tighten the screws gradually, alternating each one so that the doorknobs come together evenly.

Key Points to remember

As you remove the various parts, put them back together in the same positions they were in, including screws.

If the new bolt mechanism or strike plate feels loose, replace the screws with longer ones.

If you stumble at any level, and you can’t repair it further, then get professional help.

Safety Tips:

Wear gloves to protect your hands

Follow the instructions carefully

Go slowly. Make sure that you understand all the steps as it can be confusing

Keep the tools and other important parts away from children

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How to Fix a Drawer That Sticks

Examine the whole drawer/bureau.

Swap the sticking drawer with another same-size drawer in the piece of furniture if that will fix the problem.

If this doesn't help, look in the bureau opening where the drawer is. Is there an obstruction, like a nail or a lost sock? If a nail is poking out, hammer it into the wood. If a sock is causing the problem, remove it.

If you don't find any obstructions, lightly sand the runners of a wood drawer, then rub them with paraffin, beeswax or bar soap.

If the drawer is metal, wipe the runners with a dry rag/cloth and apply a small amount of lubricating oil.

If the bottom of the drawer sags, causing it to drag, slip out the bottom of the drawer. Then flip it over and re-insert it into the drawer.

If one of the corners or a side is loose, glue it into place with wood glue. Hold the sides together with a corner clamp while the glue dries.

Consider the following option as a last resort, since it permanently alters the drawer.

Sand down a side of the drawer so it fits more smoothly into the bureau.

Tips:

Excess moisture, due to rain or humidity, can make wood swell and often causes the drawers to stick. Apply wax, such as beeswax or paraffin, to seal the wood and help prevent moisture-induced swelling in future. Wear gloves to protect your hands while doing the application.

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Cleaning

How to Remove Rust

Follow these tips to get rid of rust and prevent its return to most surfaces.

First and foremost, put on your rubber gloves.

Treat the affected material (metal or otherwise) with a rust-removing agent that contains oxalic acid.

Follow the instructions, as given on the label of the product you are using, carefully.

Prevent indoor metal items from rusting by keeping their surfaces dry, dusting them regularly and wiping them down with a damp cloth and then drying them immediately.

Keep outdoor wrought-iron structures rust-free by removing existing rust with a wire brush and some sandpaper or a sandblaster.

Safety Tips

Follow the instructions carefully

Keep the solvent away from children

The solvents are combustible, so use them carefully

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How to clean an Oven

Fast cleaning:

Only use this method if you have an oven cleaner that is not affected by heat and does not contain inflammable ingredients – double-check this before use.

- 1] Remove oven racks and soak them in soapy water.
- 2] Pre-heat oven to 200 degrees.
- 3] Turn the oven off and spray the inside with oven cleaner (see important note above).
- 4] Allow the mixture to sit in the machine for 10 minutes.
- 5] Wipe the cleaner and dirt away with a damp sponge, rinsing frequently.
- 6] Dry with a soft cloth.

Self-Cleaning

- 1] Remove oven racks and soak them in soapy water.
- 2] Turn on your automatic oven cleaner. This usually means locking the door and turning the function switch to ‘clean’.

Let the oven do its work; it will heat for several hours to remove baked-on foods.

Safety Tips

Wear Gloves

Wear goggles (if needed)

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How to Clean Your Barbeque Grill

If your barbeque has a painted, a non-stick or an aluminum surface, don’t use any abrasive cleaners or metal scrubbers. Use dishwashing liquid, water and a plastic scrubber instead.

For a Charcoal Grill

Once you decide to clean the grill, use a stiff wire brush to scrape away the loose debris from the grill and grates.

Then remove the grill and grates.

Remove or scoop out all the ash that is at the bottom of the barbeque with a large spoon or cup.

Then, clean the inside and outside of the barbeque with baking soda, or any another abrasive cleaner, and a little water using a metal scouring pad.

Place the grill and grates in a large plastic bag and cover them thoroughly with oven cleaner.

Allow them to sit for several hours preferably overnight. If the grill and grates are aluminum, soak them in dishwashing liquid and water instead.

Remove the grill and grates from the plastic bag and place them on top of several layers of newspaper.

Use a metal scouring pad or stiff brush to scrub them clean.

Remember, if your grill or grates are made of aluminum then use a plastic scrubber, and not a metal one (it may damage the grill).

Wash the grill and grates to remove any bits and pieces.

Allow everything to dry thoroughly, then replace the grill and grates.

Coat the grill with vegetable oil to prevent the grill from rusting. [Back to the Index](#)

For a Gas Grill

Consult your owner's manual for basic maintenance tips. This will include checking the metal tubes under each burner.

Spiders like to nests in these tubes, which cause blockages. Use a paper clip or toothpick to clear these holes if necessary.

Remember that many gas grills are made of aluminum, so avoid using abrasive cleaners.

Soak the grill and any other removable parts in hot water with some dishwashing liquid in it.

Scrub away all the dirt. Use an old cloth, or a sponge or plastic scrubber to clean it well.

Clean the exterior of the barbeque with hot, soapy water and a sponge.

Wash the barbeque.

Allow it to dry thoroughly before you replace all of the parts.

After it is all dry, rub the grill with vegetable oil then rub linseed oil on wooden parts.

Overall Safety Tips

Wear Gloves for your hand protection

Wear eyeglasses for protection

Follow the instructions carefully

Keep tools and equipment away from children

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How to Clean Curtains

Curtains should be cleaned as they tend to accumulate dust and dirt.

Remove the curtains from the rollers or hooks. Inspect the back of the curtain for any signs of rotting from sunlight by stretching and feeling the curtains.

If the curtains are sun-rotted, then it’s time for new curtains.

Wash all the unlined curtains according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer.

All the lined curtains should be professionally dry-cleaned.

Wash large curtains in your bathtub to prevent possible damage to your washing machine.

Boil rusty curtain rings in vinegar to re-discover their shine.

Rub soap on old curtain rods to make them run smoothly again.

Toss your curtains into a dryer for a quick job. Add fabric softener to get clean, fresh curtains.

Important Tips:

Dust your curtains frequently using a vacuum attachment. This way, you will keep them clean without having to periodically take them down and put them back up. To keep a curtain from being sucked into the nozzle of the vacuum cleaner, use the lowest setting and place a stiff piece of plastic screening between the nozzle and the curtain.

Safety Tips:

Wear a mask to protect yourself from the dust

Wear eye goggles if needed

Keep the solvents away from children

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How to Clean a Bathtub

1] Cleaning the Walls above the Tub

Always wear your rubber gloves for this work.

Spray an all-purpose cleaner on the walls above the tub.

Allow the cleaner to sit on the wall for a few minutes, then rinse it or wipe it off.

Remove mildew from grout by using a tile cleaner.

Apply the tile cleaner to the grout with a grout brush and scrub thoroughly.

Rinse the whole area well.

Dry the wall with an old cloth.

2] Cleaning the Tub

Apply a heavy-duty bathtub or all-purpose cleaner to the tub. Allow it to sit for a few minutes, and then scrub it off gently with a scrub brush.

After applying the cleaner, rinse the tub.

Scrub away any remaining soap scum with a scrub brush or an old toothbrush.

Rinse the tub again.

If your bathtub is acrylic, then apply a non-abrasive bathroom or bathtub cleaner. Gently scrub with a soft-bristled brush. Rinse the tub well.

If you have a fiberglass tub, apply a specialized fiberglass cleaner or a non-abrasive bathtub. Scrub the tub gently with a sponge. Rinse the tub well. [Back to the Index](#)

How to Clean Windows

Before washing the interior windows, put some towels along the sill to keep the floor or wall dry.

Spray a commercial glass cleaner lightly on a clean cloth.

You can also make your own cleaner: 1/4-cup (2-fl oz/60 ml) vinegar
in 3 cups (24-fl oz/750 ml) warm water.

For extremely dirty windows, mix 1 tbsp. ammonia and
3 tbsp. alcohol or vinegar in 1 qt. (32 fl oz/1 l) of warm water.

Gently wipe the rag/cloth with the cleaner across the window, using horizontal strokes to prevent dripping.

Grab your squeegee. Wipe the rubber strip with a cleaning cloth to get started.

Hold the squeegee firmly and press it downward. Start each stroke in a dry spot.

Keep the squeegee blade dry by wiping it on the cleaning cloth after each stroke.

Use old sheets or towels to dry the windows.

For extra sparkle, polish the glass when it's nearly dry with a piece of newspaper or rub a clean blackboard eraser over it.

Vacuum the window frame and sills with a small brush attachment on your vacuum cleaner.

Dampen a cleaning cloth with diluted rubbing alcohol. Rub it along the sill to remove spots and smudges.

For exterior windows, start by spraying water from a garden hose to remove grime and debris; make sure the spray from the hose is gentle.

Then follow the same steps as above.

Wear gloves and goggles (if required)

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How to Remove Lipstick Stains from Fabric

Dab the stain with denatured alcohol on a soft, lint-free white cloth.

Rub dishwashing detergent gently into the stain with your finger.

Try using a stain stick, if the stain is not coming off easily.

Leave it for several minutes before washing.

Wash the fabric.

If the stain is still there, get it dry-cleaned.

Tips:

Just dab, not rub, as rubbing can grind in the stain.

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How to Remove Ink Stains

Ballpoint Pens

Dab the stain with a clean wet sponge.

Allow the stain to air dry.

Spray the stain with hair spray.

Sandwich the stained fabric between two paper towels.

Blot the back of the stained fabric, working the stain into the other paper towel until the stain is lifted.

Apply laundry pre-treatment (stain remover).

Wash in warm water and allow to air dry.

Felt Tip Pens

Press a paper towel into the stain to lift excess ink.

Apply denatured alcohol to the stain with a clean cotton swab.

Wash the fabric.

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How to Remove Coffee Stains from Carpet

Blot the stained area with a clean white cloth to absorb all the liquid you can. Blot from the outside of the stain, moving to the center to avoid spreading the stain.

Mix 1-teaspoon clear, mild liquid dishwashing detergent with 1 cup lukewarm water.

Sponge the area with the detergent solution.

Blot again with a clean, white cloth.

Mix 1/3 cup white vinegar with 2/3 cup lukewarm water.

Sponge the area with the vinegar solution.

Blot with a clean, white cloth.

Repeat the process till you completely remove the stain.

If the stain is still there, then check with your dry-cleaners or a professional carpet cleaner.

Tips:

Avoid rubbing or scrubbing as it will spread the stain

Make sure you mix the ingredients correctly

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How to Touch Up Your Appliances

Wear your gloves and get the appliance that needs its paint to be touched up.

Sand the damaged area lightly with fine-grit sandpaper. Roughen the area to be painted and remove any rust, but avoid sanding the surrounding surface.

Clean the area thoroughly with a rag dampened with paint thinner.

Let it dry.

Paint over scratches with appliance touch-up paint, using a fine-tip paintbrush.

Let it dry overnight.

Fill nicks by building up thin layers of paint. Allow each layer to dry completely before painting the next layer.

Important:

Touch-up paint can be purchased from hardware or home improvement stores.

Safety Tips:

Keep the ingredients away from children

Follow the instructions carefully

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Storage

Storing Jewelry

Store jewelry in sturdy cases with soft, lined interiors to avoid impact against hard surfaces and scratching.

Place jewelry in soft fabric pouches if no jewelry cases are available.

Store each jewelry item separately to avoid tangles and scratches.

Use tarnish-resistant cloth and cases to store silver.

Keep your jewelry boxes away from high heat and excessive moisture, as it can damage your jewelry.

Consider purchasing a jewelry box with a lock and key for extra security.

Things to remember

Examine your jewelry regularly to check for loose settings, prongs and clasps.

Have your jewelry professionally cleaned once a year.

Avoid exposing jewelry to perfume, perspiration and cosmetics, which can stain many stones.

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How to Store Kitchen Linen

Wash or dry-clean your linens thoroughly before storing them to prevent mold growth. Stains will easily grow mold if they are left.

Brush off any mold you find on your linens outdoors so the spores do not land on any linen.

Soak linens in bleach and water before washing to remove any mold.

Rinse linens thoroughly of all soap to prevent spotting.

Place linens in a cool, dark, dry closet in your house.

Roll up linens when you store them so that they keep their shape and color.

Store linens - cotton, linen or muslin - in a garment bag.

Try to use acid-free tissue paper, if available, to separate your linens.

Rotate your linens every six months to keep them fresh.

Place a lavender sachet with your linens to keep them smelling fresh.

Important:

Do not store linens in plastic, cardboard or cedar. Each emits fumes and acids that can stain the linen.

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How to Use Appliances

How to Use a Coffeemaker

- 1] Be sure the coffeemaker is clean.
- 2] Use fresh, cold water to fill the water reservoir.
- 3] Put in just a little bit more water than you intend to drink.
- 4] Put a paper filter in the filter basket.
- 5] Use the manufacturer's suggested grind for your coffeemaker. Begin with 1 tbsp. coffee per 6-oz. water, and then adjust for your personal preference.
- 6] Turn the coffeemaker on.

Wait until the coffee is brewed, and then pour yourself a steaming cup.

Important Tips:

Keep your coffee in an airtight container and store it in the refrigerator or freezer to keep it fresh for as long as possible.

Let the coffee powder reach room temperature before brewing it.

Keep your coffeemaker clean for the best-tasting coffee.

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How to Use a Blender

Choose a flat, dry surface on which to operate your blender.

Put the blender together. Place the blades in the retaining ring, then set the gasket over the blades and inside the ring.

Screw the retaining ring firmly to the bottom of the pitcher. Be sure the retaining ring is seated correctly or there will be a leak.

Set the pitcher on the base and plug the blender in.

Put the recipe ingredients in the pitcher. Put lid on firmly.

Use the Ice or Chop setting to make milkshakes, smoothies or frozen drinks.

The Pulse setting is for making breadcrumbs and cracker crumbs, grating chocolate and chopping vegetables.

Add food to the blender through the secondary lid when the blender is running.

Clean the pitcher after each use.

Put in a little bit of dishwashing detergent, add some water to the halfway mark, put the lid on, and run the blender - with lid on - on a low speed for a few seconds.

Rinse the blender thoroughly. Then, take it apart and dry off the blades.

Important Tips:

Use a food processor if you need to blend more than four cups of food.

For longer service life, hand-wash the blade assembly and gasket as well as the plastic pitchers.

Put your hand on top of the lid when blending to ensure that the pitcher stays seated on the motor.

Safety Tips

Never stick a spoon, spatula or your hand in the blender while the blades are moving.

Be careful when adding hot food to your blender. Glass pitchers, in particular, are likely to crack if the food is hot.

Don't lift the pitcher off the blender until the motor has stopped.

Always add liquid when crushing ice. If you crush ice without any extra liquid, you can damage the container and blades.

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How to Make Your Own Air Freshener

Ingredients:

1. 4 tbsp.-dried sage
2. 30 to 40 crumbled dried bay leaves and
3. 1 c. witch hazel (liquid).

Put all the ingredients in a medium-sized glass jar.

Mix the ingredients well and cover with a lid.

Let the mixture sit at room temperature for three days, then mix it again.

Strain the herb leaves from the mixture.

Pour the liquid into a spray bottle.

Your very own air freshener is ready

Tips:

Witch hazel is available at all the local drugstores.

The mixture can be kept for several months.

Do not spray directly on clothes or fabric.

Don’t spray it on your body.

Keep it away from children.

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Wrapping it up

This book has several easy repairs for you, and even some advice on other household problems such as removing stains.

I got carried away with writing ☺

You now know you can change a doorknob, fix a floor, paint, replace tile and even change a window.

Do not fear the unknown. You can learn to build shelves and even put in a fan. Stick with those jobs that are not too ‘physical’ for you.

I think you should start building your own toolbox. I actually keep a hammer and four screwdrivers (2 Phillips and 2 Straight edge - one large and one small of each) in a kitchen drawer where they are handy for me. [Back to the Index](#)

[Another eBookWholesaler Publication](#)