

How To Fix The 14 Most Annoying Home Problems

As preppers, we're typically good at fixing things because we enjoy being self-sufficient. These annoying home problems won't be annoying anymore after you read through these tips and learn how to fix them yourself. You've probably already heard of (and likely tried) some of the methods but we hope that you gain some insights and knowledge from some of the others!

Leaking Toilets

Leaking toilets waste a huge amount of water but are an easy fix even if you've never done it before – there are only two main causes. Either your rubber flapper is leaking or your chain that raises the flapper is too long or too short.

To make sure that it's one of these two problems, add a couple of drops of food coloring to your back tank. If you see the water in your bowl changing colors within a few minutes, it's the flapper.

Check the chain first. Make sure it's long enough to let the flap close but not so long that it gets caught under the flapper. It's typically adjustable so if this is the problem, just re-hook it so that it's the proper length. If it's not the chain, you need to replace the flapper.

You can get them for very little cash at your local hardware or construction supply store.

Drippy Faucets

[These are another huge water waster](#) and the sound will drive you nuts. They're usually caused by a worn washer. There are three types of faucets: two-valve, pull-out and single-arm.

Where the washer is in your faucet depends upon the type of faucet but that's easy to figure out.

Just go to the manufacturer's site and look up what type your faucet is, then look up how-to videos or tutorials to change it.

Video first seen on [Andrew Hill](#)

Stripped Screws

This issue can make any project a real pain but stripped screws are really common, especially in older items. Here's the solution: place a rubber band between your screwdriver and the screw head. The rubber band will help you get a grip so that you can get the screw out.

Drafty Rotted Wooden Window Frames

This is a common problem in old houses. The bottom of the [window frame rots and lets in drafts](#) which can drive your heating bill through the roof. If it's just a small spot, you can fix it with epoxy. Scrape off all the rotten wood so that you're down to smooth wood. Mix the epoxy and smear it on neatly. Don't mix the epoxy until you're ready to use it because it sets in about 30 minutes.

Clogged Drains

Plumbers cost a fortune, if you can get one to your house before the second coming. Luckily, clogged drains are often easy to fix yourself. There are several fixes for this.

First, pour 1/2 cup baking soda down the drain and follow it with 1/2 cup vinegar. Let it set for half hour to an hour and repeat if it seems to be working.

Second, if you suspect the clog is caused by grease, pour a cup of baking soda down the drain followed by 1/2 cup of salt.

Top it off with a couple of cups of boiling water.

Third, try a plunger. You need to cover the overflow hole with a towel or something so that you get a seal. If you need to, rub some petroleum jelly on the edge of the plunger so that you get a better seal. You want the plunger covered in water so if there isn't enough standing water, run some more.

Fourth, a coat hanger works well as a drain snake. Just bend it straight, leaving a small hook at the end. Stick it down the drain and twist it back and forth a bit, then pull it up to see what you can fish out or shove it down to see if you can push through the clog. Warning: this can be pretty disgusting, but it's effective. You may want to wear gloves.

Stinky Drain

Stinky drains are typically caused by bacteria, so that's what you want to address. First, run your water as hot as you can get it, then add a couple of tablespoons of baking soda. If the smell lingers, pour some bleach or vinegar down the drain. Don't use both, though – pick a method.

If you have a garbage disposal, you can prevent getting a stinky drain by tossing in some lemon peels when you use them and grinding them through.

Cabinets that Don't Close Properly

This is not only annoying, it can be dangerous. Usually, this is caused by doors that overlap or aren't adjusted properly. Try tightening the hinges. If that doesn't work, you may be able to adjust your hinges. Just open the door and look for the screw on the hinge that's closest to the opening. Turn it clockwise to move the edge of the door further over the opening if there's a gap. If there's an overlap, turn the screw counterclockwise to bring the door closer to the hinge. If all else fails, replace the hinges.

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Smoke Detector Is Too Sensitive

There was once a running joke in our house that dinner was ready when the smoke alarm went off. This had less to do with my cooking prowess and more to do with the fact that the smoke detector seemed to do as it pleased. The problem is that you WANT your smoke detector to go off if there's a fire, but not if somebody is just baking cookies.

The logical solution is to move it to an area that's further away from the kitchen but that's not always viable. Instead, check to see if your detector is adjustable. If so, follow the simple directions that came with it. An alternative solution is to use a fan to blow over the smoke detector while you're cooking. Just turn it off when you're done.

Storage Overflow

You have too much stuff. It happens. Kids' artwork, seasonal clothes, family heirlooms – they all combine to make a cluttered mess. Storage bins are great for this, and if it's a clothes issue, invest in one of those vacuum sealing systems. They'll knock down the space taken up by stored clothes and bedding by at least half.

Storage bins are great, too. Just pack away everything that's in your closet, stuffed under your bed or piled on your exercise bike, label the box, and stack them neatly in the garage, attic or closet.

For kids' artwork, if you're not completely attached to the real thing, take pictures of them, then store them in your cloud account. That way, you can always go back and look through them but they aren't cluttering up the house for years

to come.

Squeaky Doors

This is a personal pet peeve; squeaky doors are annoying but easy to fix. Try a bit of WD-40. That stuff is magic. You may need to tighten or adjust the hinges, too. Just use a screwdriver to do so – you'll be able to see how the hinge operates when you look at it. If the squeak persists, remove the hinge pin with a screwdriver and scrub it with some steel wool. Spray WD-40 on it and place it back in the hinge. Swing the door back and forth a few times and enjoy the quiet!

Video first seen on [Donny Doors](#)

Squeaky Floors and Stairs

Nothing is louder than a squeaky wooden floor at 3am. To fix it, try sweeping some talcum powder into the joints that are squeaking. If that doesn't work, you may need to attach to floorboards to the subflooring. It sounds harder than it actually is. Check out this [tutorial](#).

Slow Drain

If your sink or tub isn't draining as quickly as you'd like, we're here to help. First, it's likely draining slowly because there is debris such as hair starting to clog in it. You can get this dandy little tool called a zip-it from your local hardware store for just a couple of bucks. It slides down in the drain and pulls out the yuck.

It could be that your pop up stopper is dirty, too. If so, clean around it, removing it if necessary. Clean the overflow hole, too. You can also use the methods described above for clearing a clogged drain.

Singing Faucet

That atrocious sound when you turn on the hot water is likely caused by either a loose or worn washer or a clogged washer seat. To find out which, turn off the water and disassemble the faucet. If the washers appear worn or loose, tighten them up or put in a new washer. While you're in there, make sure that the pipe around the washer isn't clogged or dirty.

Weak Water Pressure

Before you go troubleshooting your house looking for a leak or other cause of poor water pressure, talk to your neighbors. If they're experiencing the problem too, there may not be anything you can do other than complain to your local water company.

If you're the only one with a problem, troubleshoot where the problem is coming from. If it's equally bad throughout the entire house and your house is more than 20 years old, your pipes may be clogged with lime scale and other mineral deposits. Unfortunately, about the only fix for this is to replace your plumbing.

You should check the main water supply coming in to the house before you go replacing your pipes. Check this at the main water valve where the water company turns off your water. There's a water supply valve there that allows water to flow to the house and it may not be open all the way. It's located on the pipes where the cold water comes into the house. Often, it's a red metal turn knob. If it's not all the way, open it.

If the weak water pressure is localized to one or a couple faucets, you may be able to fix the problem without calling a plumber. If it's in the shower, your showerhead may be clogged. Remove it and soak it in vinegar or in a special solution made for eating away hard water deposits.

There may also be a waterflow restrictor in the faucet or showerhead. Look for a rubber or brass washer – that's the restrictor. Look also for other washers that have become loose

or dislodged and may be causing the problem.

Though these all may seem like small problems, they're irritating and can often cost you money if you don't fix them. We hope that these tips for fixing 14 of the most annoying home problems were helpful. If you have a handy solution to offer to these or other household issues, please share them with us in the comments section below!

*This article has been written by **Theresa Crouse** for [Survivopedia](#).*