

How To Fix A Leak

Water leak and detection is a skill that most homeowners should keep in their back pocket for when leaks occur, and they eventually will happen. Repairing a leaky pipe, a faulty fixture or a running toilet is often times an easy fix, depending on the type of leak and your level of expertise.

If you're naturally handy around the house, fixing a leaking pipe may be a great solution to **temporarily** prevent further damage to the surrounding areas of your home. The operative word being "temporarily." Leaking pipes, if left unrepaired for long periods of time, can cause extensive damage to floors and ceilings and create mold inside your home's drywall.

Step By Step Water Leak Repairs

While we can give you the tools and know-how to effectively execute a water leak repair, it is best to contact a professional plumber and schedule a leak detection and repair appointment to assess whether your pipes need to be replaced. Here are some quick steps you can take to fix a water leak and buy you some time.

1. Turn Off the Water Supply

First things first. If you have already located the leak, shut off the water supply before attempting to fix the leak. There are shut-off valves under the kitchen and bathroom sinks, as well as on the underside of your toilet. Turn the valve counterclockwise to shut off the water supply. In some instances, you may have to turn off the main water valve which is located on the exterior of your house.

After you have cut off the water supply flowing to the home or a specific location in the home, it is recommended that you run the faucets to empty the pipes before beginning your water leak repair.

2. Clean Up Any Water & Dry the Pipes

Clean up any water that may have accumulated on any surfaces that surround the leak. Once you've soaked up the water, it's time to dry the pipe/pipes so that the putty can be applied to a dry surface.

3. Apply Plumbing Putty to Leaky Pipe

Plumbing putty is a powerful repair tool used to patch and repair leaking pipes. Before handling the plumber's putty, it is recommended that you wear latex gloves to avoid chemical burns on the skin. With gloves in place, begin by ripping off a piece of the epoxy putty from the tube and mix to activate it.

When the plumbing putty turns a light gray, it's ready to be applied to the location of the leak. Ensuring that you form a .5-inch-thick layer of putty, wrap the putty around the leak to completely cover the area. Press firmly around the edges of the putty to create a watertight seal.

Remember that fixing a leak with plumbing epoxy is only a temporary fix and you'll need to schedule an appointment with a professional plumber to repair the leak or replace the pipe entirely.

4. Replace The Leaky Pipe

If you're looking for a more permanent solution, you'll need to replace the faulty section of the pipe. This will require a trip to the hardware store to purchase the right size fixtures, couplings and piping.

Coupling is a vital piece of equipment for any plumber. It allows plumbers to fix water leaks without having to cut out an entire section when there's damage to the pipe. Couplings can be fitted easily between pipes and require little knowledge to properly install. Make sure you get all the proper measurements before making your purchase.

The coupling needs to be the same diameter and the same material as the leaking pipe. If you are unsure, you may want to consider taking pictures of

the pipe with your smartphone so that someone from the hardware store can guide you through the buying process.

5. Using Clamps for Water Leak Repairs

Replacing entire sections of pipes is costly, so for smaller leaks, it may be more affordable to use a pipe clamp to fix water leaks. Pipe clamps are outfitted with rubber gaskets on either end to create a watertight seal around the faulty pipe and stop it from leaking. This is also easily found at any local hardware store and requires little to no prior plumbing knowledge to effectively install them.