

Bathrooms



Bath Fixtures

The bathroom fixtures have protective surfaces that preserve their appearance and performance.

The bathtubs, sinks, showers, and toilets in your new home have protective surfaces. Keeping these surfaces clean and taking preventative measures to avoid damaging them will help preserve their look and functionality.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Follow these care and maintenance suggestions for your home's bath fixtures.

GENERAL CARE GUIDELINES

Run exhaust fans or open windows to remove moisture from the bathroom.

Don't use sinks, bathtubs, showers, or other bath fixtures to hold paint cans, trash, or tools.

Cover plumbing fixtures when you're painting walls and ceilings.

Don't step into a bathtub or shower stall with shoes on. Shoe soles carry gritty particles that can scratch the surface.

Don't dispose of photographic developing solutions in sinks, tubs, or toilets. Developer stains are extremely difficult to remove.

MIRRORS

Clean mirrors with an ammonia-free cleaner. Using ammonia-based mirror cleaners will cause de-silvering along the edges of the mirrors.

SHOWERS

Wipe the shower area dry after each use.

Clean the shower with an ordinary dishwashing detergent unless hard water minerals have been deposited.

Use Rain-X®* on glass to help reduce watermarks.

*Rain-X® is a registered trademark of SOPUS Products.

Never use steel wool or scouring pads on the metal portion of shower enclosures. They remove the protective finish applied by the manufacturer and cause unsightly scratches.

Make sure water isn't escaping the shower enclosure. If it is escaping, make sure the door is completely closed.

If hard water minerals have been deposited, use a commercial glass cleaner containing ammonia or 1 tablespoon of household ammonia diluted in 1 quart of water.

BATHTUBS

Clean bathtub with a foaming bath and tile cleaner to remove normal soil.

Never use any type of abrasive to clean the bathtub.

Don't use the tub spout as a support when getting in or out of the tub. Using the spout as a support may permanently damage it.

FIBERGLASS BATHTUBS AND SHOWERS

Use special fiberglass cleaners, which are available at most supermarkets. Spray window cleaners also are effective.

For long-term protection, wax your fiberglass units with high-quality automobile wax immediately upon move-in and after each major cleaning.

Never use powdered cleansers or any type of abrasive on fiberglass tubs and showers.

TOILETS

See Toilets (p. 9).

CAULKING

See Interior Caulking (p. 7).

Bath Tile and Grout

Ceramic tile's natural beauty adds a decorative touch to bath areas.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Ceramic tile is generally easy to maintain. Use the following suggestions to help keep your ceramic floors and walls looking new.

FLOOR AND WALL TILE

Sweep or vacuum the floor areas to remove dust and debris before cleaning them.

Sweep or vacuum the floor tiles regularly to remove any abrasive particles that could damage the floor.

Clean the tile using a non-oil-based household cleaner that's compatible with cement grouts.

Wipe tile with a moist cloth, and wet mop it occasionally.

Clean and scrub tile floors with a cleaning solution using a cotton mop, cloth, sponge, or nonmetallic brush, and then rinse with clean water to remove the cleaning solution.

Avoid mildew buildup by cleaning tile with a cleaner specified to control mildew.

Use protective pads on furniture bottoms to help prevent scratching the tile.

SHOWER TILES

Clean ceramic shower tiles using an everyday, multipurpose spray cleaner that removes soap scum, hard water deposits, and mildew.



Refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for maintaining your tile.

GROUT

Clean the grout used between ceramic tiles with a brush and a mild cleanser.

Use a grout sealer to make the grout more resistant to stains. This product can be purchased at most home care centers. Be aware that some sealers may discolor the grout.

Inspect for grout cracks frequently. Re-caulk and re-grout as soon as a crack is detected. When removing and replacing cracked grout, take it down to the subfloor or concrete to ensure that the new grout has adequate depth; otherwise, the new grout could re-crack or flake off.



Never use cleaners that contain acids or ammonia. Cleaners with acid will damage the grout and tile glazing, and ammonia cleaners might discolor the grout.

Interior Caulking

Interior caulking is the elastic sealer around bathtubs, showers, countertop backsplashes, and other areas that need protection against water entry.

Interior caulking, which seals areas in your home and helps prevent moisture problems, will separate and deteriorate over the years. If you don't maintain caulk on a consistent basis, moisture can work its way behind fixtures, damaging drywall and framing.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Follow these care and maintenance suggestions for your home's interior caulking.

TO CHECK CAULK

Check and replace the caulk around areas that were caulked when your home was built. Look for separated and deteriorated caulk. The following are typical examples of places with caulk:

Around showers, bathtubs, sinks, toilets, and other plumbing fixtures.

Around window frames and door frames.

Around countertop backsplashes, ceramic walls, and floors.

Around ceiling fixtures and the attic door.

Between the sill plate and the foundation.



Don't use acrylic caulking over silicone caulking and vice versa. These two types of caulking do not bond properly with each other.

TO REAPPLY INTERIOR CAULK

1. Remove the old caulk with a putty knife, scraper, or painter's tool.



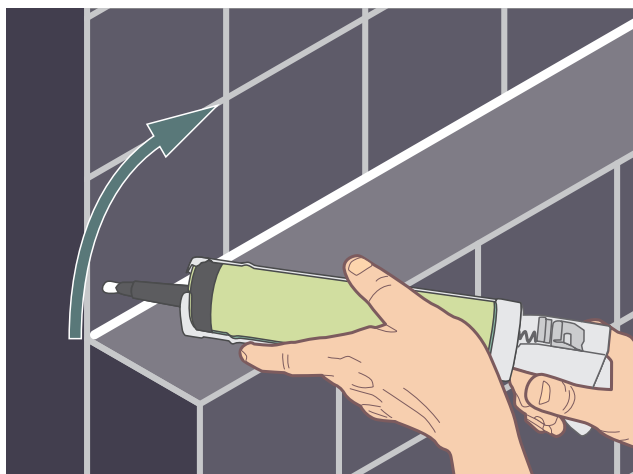
2. Clean and dry the area that needs re-caulking. Caulk won't adhere correctly to a damp or dirty surface.



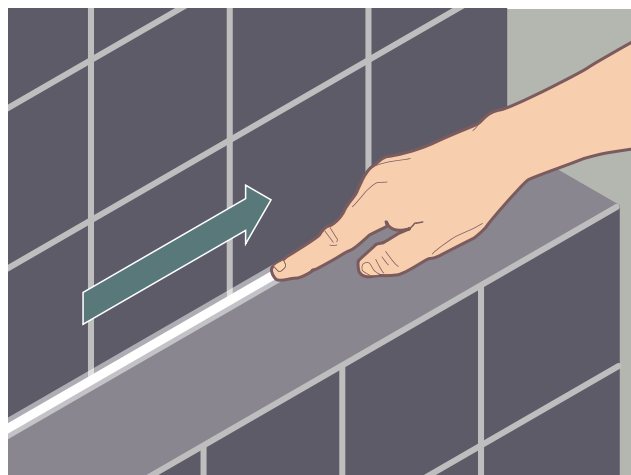
3. Apply the new caulk. Hold the caulking tube at a 45° angle from the surface. Push, rather than pull, the tube to drive the caulk into the gap. Pushing helps to fill the gap completely without trapping any air bubbles.



4. Twist the caulking tube and pull it back to break the caulk bead.



5. Run your finger along the joint to smooth and compress the caulk.



If you're using a caulking gun to apply the caulking, follow the directions on the tube to load and use the gun.



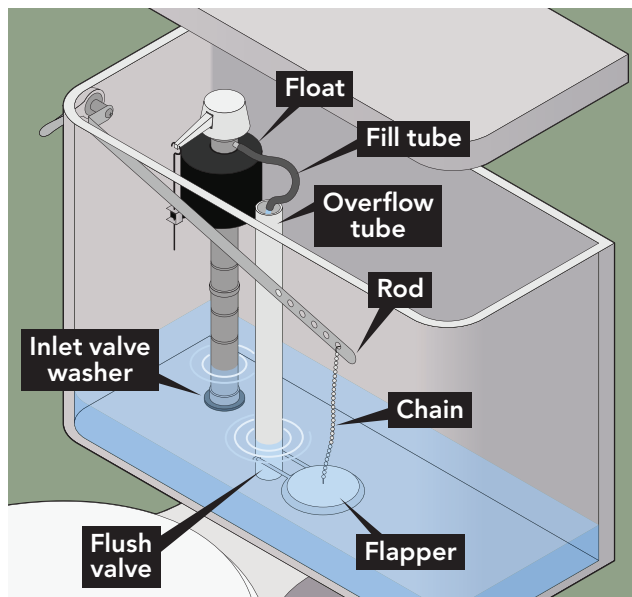
Don't apply exterior caulk in cold weather. Caulk is best applied when the outdoor temperature is between 50°F and 70°F.

Toilets

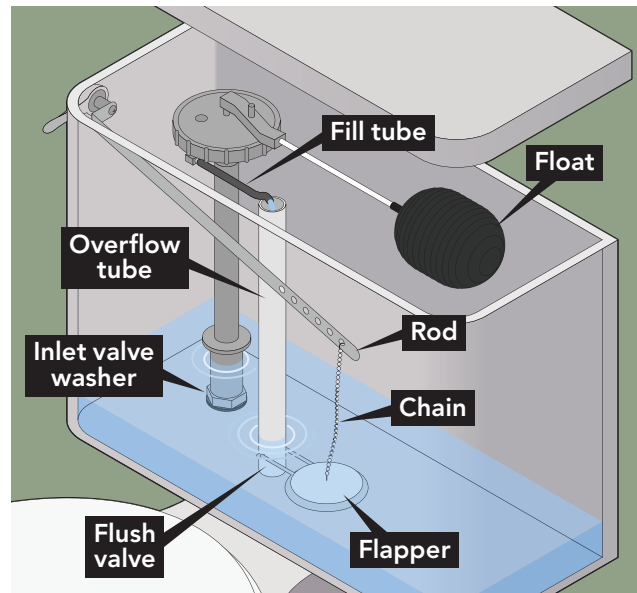
Toilets are durable fixtures with parts and surfaces that require some maintenance.

Toilets are made of vitreous china, a type of clay with a smoothed, glazed surface. The surface is durable, but can be scratched with improper cleaning and use. The parts in the tank need replacing throughout the life of the home.

Toilet tank components: Filler float type



Toilet tank components: Ball float type



CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Follow these care and maintenance suggestions for your home's toilets.

TO CLEAN THE TOILET BOWL

Use a commercial cleaner made especially for the toilet. Use it according to the manufacturer's instructions. Don't mix it or use it with household bleach or any other cleaning product.

Don't use suspended chlorine cleaning bars, chlorine tablets, or bluing pellets in your toilet; they can cause early deterioration of the rubber pieces located inside the toilet tank.

TO PROTECT THE FINISH

Don't use commercial toilet cleaners for anything but the inside of the toilet bowl.

Don't use a strong abrasive to clean the outside of the toilet; it may scratch the finish.

Don't clean the inside of the toilet tank; you risk damaging the interior parts.

Don't pour hot water into the toilet bowl or tank.

TO PREVENT CLOGGING

Pay special attention to the holes located under the bowl rim. If they aren't cleaned regularly, they can become clogged and cause the toilet to malfunction.

Never flush hair, grease, lint, diapers, rubbish, facial tissues, etc., down the toilet. These types of waste stop up the toilet and sanitary sewer lines.

TO ADJUST THE WATER LEVEL IN THE TANK

Find the water level adjustment screw on top of the water control. Turn the screw clockwise to lower the water level and counterclockwise to raise it. The water level line is marked on the back of the tank.

TO ADJUST THE TANK FILL TIME

If your toilet has this feature, find the flow rate adjustment screw on top of the float rod assembly. Turn the screw clockwise to reduce the flow rate of the water and counterclockwise to increase it.



Toilet tank lids, which are also made of vitreous china, can be deceptively heavy, so be careful when lifting one off the tank before performing maintenance.

Repair

IF THE TOILET DOESN'T FLUSH

Adjust the float, which maintains the water level in the tank, so that the tank can store enough water for flushing.

Replace the flapper. The rubber flapper can deteriorate over time. You can find a new flapper at any hardware store. Follow the instructions on the package to replace it.

IF THE WATER TANK APPEARS TO BE LEAKING

If the tank appears to be leaking, it might be that condensation is forming on the outside of the tank and dripping to the floor.

IF WATER LEAKS INTO THE BOWL

First, check the overflow tube. While holding the float, bend the rod closer to the bottom of the tank. Flush the toilet.

If water continues to leak into the bowl, you might need to replace the washer on the inlet valve.

If water leaks into the bowl, but isn't coming through the overflow tube, it's probably coming from the flush valve. Align the rods between the flush valve and the flushing handle so that the flush valve float drops straight down when the toilet is flushed.

If water leaks into the bowl from the tank, it could be caused by a warped flapper in the toilet tank. Check the flapper, and replace if necessary.

CONDENSATION ON THE WATER TANK

Condensation can occur on the outside of the water tank and may look similar to a leak.