

How to Prevent Kitchen Sink Clogs & Using the Garbage Disposal

Garbage disposal may be useful in clearing minor debris through drain lines, but if not operated and maintained properly, a garbage disposal can easily break down, clog your kitchen sink drain, or cause other plumbing problems. Most garbage disposal troubles are avoidable, and maintenance is easy.

Run your garbage disposal regularly. Frequent use prevents rust and corrosion, assures that all parts stay moving, and prevents obstructions from accumulating.

Things to Avoid Putting in Your Garbage Disposal

A garbage disposal is designed for minor food scraps only, WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

Don't grind glass, plastic, metal, or paper.

Don't pour cooking grease, oil, or fat into your garbage disposal or drain. Grease will slowly build up and impede your garbage disposal's grinding ability and clog sink drains and the plumbing system.

Don't use hot water when grinding food waste. Hot water will cause grease to liquefy and accumulate, causing clogged drains.

Don't put extremely fibrous materials like corn husks, celery stalks, onion skins, and artichokes. While biodegradable, these fibers can tangle and jam the garbage disposal motor and block drains.

Foods like pasta and rice expand when you add water, which will do the same in your pipes and garbage disposal and clog kitchen sinks.

Avoid putting coffee grounds, tea, and eggshells in the garbage disposal. They can accumulate in drains and pipes and cause a blockage.

Cleaning

Keep your garbage disposal clean. Pour a little dish soap inside and let the garbage disposal run for a minute or so with some cold water after washing dishes.

Borax is an example of a natural cleaner and sanitizer that effectively works on odor-causing residue that accumulates in garbage disposals. Don't use harsh chemicals like bleach or drain cleaners; they can damage garbage disposal blades and pipes, causing more plumbing problems. Never pour insecticide, paint, gasoline or other toxic chemicals down the drain.

Troubleshooting Minor Issues with Your Garbage Disposal

If nothing happens when you flip the switch, there could be a power outage. Try resetting the GFCI outlet.

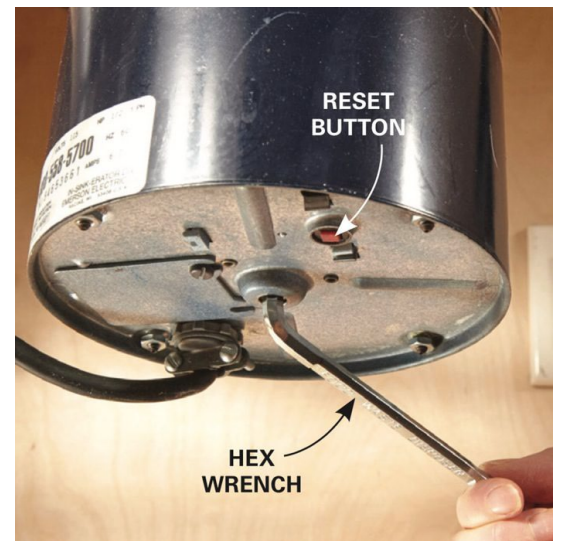
Resetting the GFCI can usually be located along the wall above the kitchen counters. If it's tripped, the RESET button will stick up. Unplug any devices or appliances plugged into the GFI or nearby outlets, and then you can reset it by pushing the RESET button. If the disposal isn't responding, there could be a larger issue, and you should submit a maintenance service request.



There's a second reset button located at the bottom of the garbage disposal unit itself. To reset this, ensure the disposal switch is off, gently **press the red button to reset the disposal**, turn the faucet on, use cold water, and turn on the disposal. If the garbage disposal reset button will not stay in, or if you must repeatedly reset the overload protector, the disposal may require service.



If the disposal turns on but you hear a humming sound of the motor straining, there may be a foreign object jamming the impeller lugs or "blades." Unplug or disconnect power to the disposal. Identify the hex socket on the center of the underside of the [garbage disposal unit](#). It's inside a small, round hole in the motor housing. Insert the hex wrench or Allen wrench into this socket, and then move the wrench back and forth to free the jam or confirm that the impellers are freed. This socket is connected directly to the impeller hub, and moving the wrench usually loosens whatever object is jamming the disposal. Restore power, reset the disposal with the reset button and turn on cold water and test the disposal.



Important Safety Information

These are general maintenance tips and simple remedies for minor problems. If you try these solutions and they don't work, or if your problem persists, please contact management office. If you feel unsafe or unqualified at any time, please management office.