

Making Simple Repairs: Using a Plunger to Unstop a Toilet¹

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There may be a time when your toilet is stopped up; the water will not drain out. You may be able to unstop it by using a plunger.

There are two types of plungers.

1. One type of plunger is specifically designed for a toilet. (Fig. 1)



Fig. 1

2. One type of plunger does not have the center section. It can be used for other types of drains as well as for toilets. (Fig. 2)



Fig. 2

How To Fix

- Inspect the toilet. Wear rubber gloves and try to remove anything that you see (such as a child's toy) that is stopping it up. Sometimes children put great quantities of tissue or other items in the toilet that can be removed with a coat hanger.
- If the toilet is still stopped up, use a plunger. Place the plunger over the hole in the bottom of the toilet. (Fig. 3)

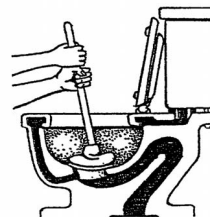


Fig. 3

After the plunger is properly in place:

1. Press down on the plunger slowly and pull it up quickly.

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2. Repeat the process about 20-30 times.
3. Remove the plunger and flush the toilet (or pour water in the bowl of the toilet).
4. If the water still backs up, bail the water out to keep it from overflowing. Use the plunger again.
5. This will usually solve the problem. If it does not, contact your landlord or call a plumber.