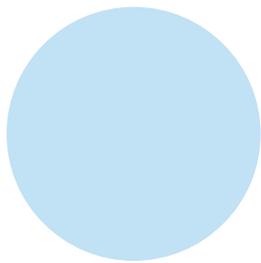
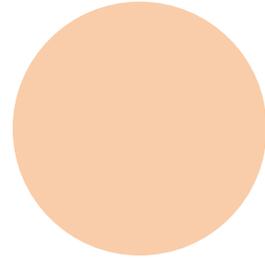
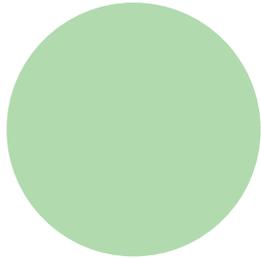


# IMPROVEMENT CENTER



## Bathroom Plumbing Remodeling Guide

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As with some of the most used rooms in your home, your bathrooms may begin to show a little wear and tear. Fortunately it doesn't take much to give them a quick face-lift: a fresh coat of paint, a new floor covering, or updated plumbing fixtures can work wonders.

While putting in a new tub or shower might be beyond the abilities of most DIYers, you can try several other plumbing upgrades that are a little easier. These projects may require just a few common tools and an hour or two of your spare time.

## DIY-Friendly Bathroom Plumbing Projects

Remember these two important things when working on a DIY bathroom plumbing project:

1. Water can make a mess.
2. Tools can scratch.

Turn off the water to the fixture you'll be working on at either the shut-off valve on its supply line or the main water cut-off for the home. Water lines for the sink and toilet normally have a nearby valve, but when working on the tub or shower, you'll probably need to use the main valve. Once the valve is off, open the fixture's valves to allow water in the lines to drain.

Many of the fixtures in your bathroom can be easily damaged. You could chip, scratch, or crack granite, cultured marble, or porcelain simply by setting a tool down too hard -- and suddenly your project costs have skyrocketed. A good rule of thumb is that if you have to place your tools down on any bathroom surface, imagine that it's very thin glass -- or better yet, spread out a few old towels. Keeping these two considerations in mind, here are two DIY-friendly bathroom plumbing projects.

## Installing a New Toilet

Most toilets used in homes are one- or two-piece models -- both have their bowls secured to the floor with bolts, but the two-



piece models have a detachable tank. Here are the required steps to take out the old toilet and install the new one:

1. Begin removing the old toilet by unhooking the water supply line at the rear of the fixture and using a wet-vacuum to remove any water that remains in the tank and bowl. Flushing the toilet after shutting off the water can minimize the amount left behind.
2. If it's a two-piece model, use a screwdriver and wrench to remove the two bolts securing the tank to the bowl. Lift the tank up and sit it gently aside.
3. Two bolts hold the bowl to the floor at the drain flange -- you may have to pop off the decorative covers for them to be visible. Remove the bolts with a wrench and screwdriver or two wrenches.
4. Installing the new toilet is just a matter of reversing the steps, but you should always install a new wax ring at the drain flange to reduce the chance of leaks. The components in the old tank can be transferred over to the new toilet very easily, but you may want to replace those as well.

5. When tightening the toilet bowl to the drain, take care not to over-tighten as you may break the flange.

Once you're sure that everything is in place and secure, turn the water back on and check for leaks. When installing a new toilet, consider a dual-flush model that can make your home more energy efficient. They're a little more expensive, but the long-term savings they can provide might make it worthwhile.

## Installing New Bathroom Sink Faucets

Bathroom sink faucets are available in many different styles and configurations, but they all use very similar installation methods. Unless you already know the measurements, remove the old faucet to check the sink or vanity top's hole spread before purchasing a new faucet.

The spread is the distance between the centers of the two outermost holes. If that distance is six inches or more, it's considered a wide-spread configuration. Spreads that are about four inches normally require a single-spread or mini-wide-spread faucet. These have the faucet and hot and cold supplies combined into one unit, while wide-spread models have three separate components.



Remove the old faucet by following these steps:

1. Disconnect the hot and cold water supply lines under the sink or inside the vanity cabinet.
2. Remove the nuts holding the faucet to the top of the sink or vanity. These nuts are on the underside and are usually somewhat easy to get to if you have a vanity top although it often requires working by feel or lying on your back. However, if you have a sink, this is often a recessed area where it's difficult to see and even harder to work. A specially designed faucet wrench can make the job much easier -- they're available at most home improvement stores.
3. You should be able to lift the faucet assembly off the sink once the nuts have been removed. You may have to loosen it by tapping gently.
4. Installing the new faucet is just a matter of reversing the removal steps. Take care not to tighten the faucet assembly to the sink too tightly or you could crack the sink or top. Also be careful not to twist or crimp the water supply lines when making those connections.
5. When everything is secure, turn the water back on and check for leaks.

Congratulations-- you've just given your bathroom a DIY plumbing face-lift.