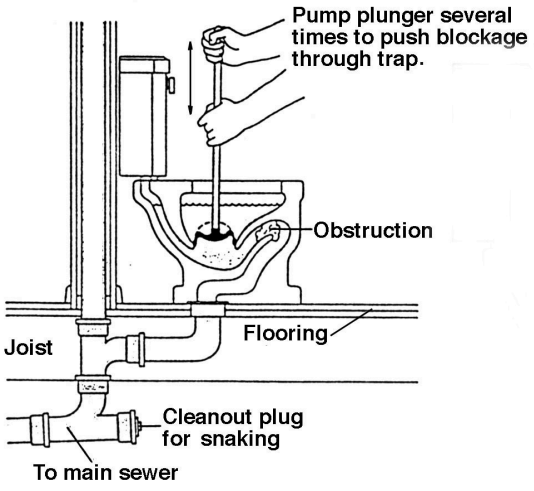
HOMEOWNER REPAIR GUIDE

UNCLOGGING YOUR TOILET

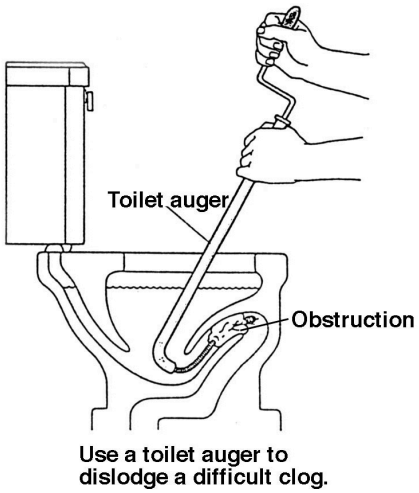
A CLOG IN THE TRAP

There is probably nothing more irritating than a clogged toilet. Usually, the problem is a clog in the trap that is built into the inside of the stool as part of the water outflow path. You clear the clog by using a toilet auger or a plunger to dislodge the obstruction and push it through the trap *(see illustrations)*.

> **NO ELECTRIC SNAKES OR DRAIN CLEANERS**
>
> Never use an electric snake or chemical drain cleaners in a toilet, as they can scar – or even crack – the porcelain.



Pump the plunger to push the blockage through the trap

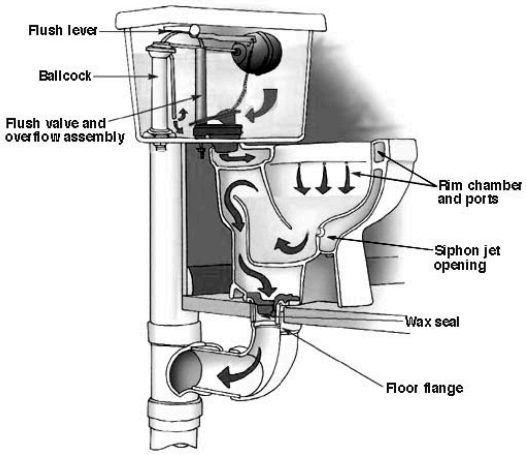


Use a toilet auger to dislodge a difficult clog

SLOW WATER INFLOW

If the trap is clear, but the waste and water don't seem to move through as they should, then there's another possibility to consider. Instead of a clog in the outflow path, water may not be able to flow into the stool rapidly enough to start the flush process. The most common symptom of this problem is that the water rises up in the bowl, and then slowly lowers without swirling.

Obstructions can occur at several points in the water inflow pathway. Many toilets have small passages built into the toilet stool, openings that can become clogged. Ordinarily, when the flush valve opens the passageway from the tank into the stool, water flows through the rim chamber, and then out these ports to wash the sides of the bowl *(see illustration)*. Some toilet designs also include a siphon jet that shoots water into the trap to start the swirling siphon effect that will empty the bowl quickly.



Rim chamber and ports, siphon jet and flush valve

1 CHECK THE FLUSH VALVE

If your toilet trap is clear, but the water still flows out slowly, check the flush valve (lift the flapper or tank ball) to ensure that the opening is free of obstructions. One of those drop-in-the-tank cleaners may have clogged the flush valve opening, or small kids may have put something in the tank.

2 REAM OUT THE PORTS

Once you have ensured that the valve is clear, use a piece of stiff wire (like an old wire coat hanger that you have straightened out) to ream out each of the rim ports and the siphon jet opening. This will break up any scale or mineral build-up clogging the openings in the stool, and allow your toilet to empty once again as it should.

LAST RESORT

Rarely, blockages can occur in the large drain pipe leading from the toilet, so if none of these procedures have solved the problem, you may be forced to take the toilet up and use a sewer snake to clear the obstruction.

Home Repair Resource center

Home Repair Resource Center empowers homeowners to maintain their homes for sustainable and diverse communities.

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