

Checklist: How to Keep Your Garbage Disposal Running Smoothly

Blog: How Plumbers in Madison, Georgia Feel About Garbage Disposal Installation

When was the last time you thought about your garbage disposal? Unless you noticed something wrong with it, you probably haven't given it a second thought. However, if you want to increase the lifespan of your disposal, you should follow these easy tips:

- **Be careful what you put down it.** Yes, the role of your garbage disposal is to chop up leftover food. But, this doesn't mean you can put everything the drain. Watch out for foods that are too hard for the blades to handle. This includes bones, fruit pits, and egg shells. Stringy foods, like celery, may cause the blades to jam. Even coffee grounds can damage the inside of your unit.
- **Keep grease away from your sink.** Grease is one of the top culprits when it comes to clogged kitchen sinks. Although grease may seem like a benign liquid, it's very dangerous to your plumbing system. Grease hardens when it gets cold. Oil and water don't mix. When grease gets inside your disposal, it leaves behind a sticky residue. The blades can even get stuck. Even worse, it may completely clog the pipes in your sink.
- **Always run cold water when it's in use.** Cold water makes it easier for the blades to grind up food particles. This is because the cold temperature causes foods to harden more. Additionally, cold water will prevent the motor from overheating.
- **Run the disposal until it stops making grinding sounds.** As long as you can hear the blades chopping up food, there is still food in the unit. Continue running the disposal until these sounds stop. This usually takes a solid minute, depending on how much food you put into the disposal.
- **Use citrus peels to prevent foul smells.** There's nothing worse than a smelly garbage disposal. If you want to prevent bad odors in your kitchen sink, put some citrus peels into the disposal. Lemons, limes, and oranges are great options. Citrus fruits have antibacterial properties. Not only will your sink smell delicious, but the citrus peels will also sanitize it.
- **Pour boiling water down your sink every month.** Hot water helps to loosen any hardened food particles that may be lurking inside your garbage disposal. Slowly pour boiling water into the sink. The water should easily flow down the drain. If it's sluggish, you have a clog brewing. Continue pouring more water until any food particles break away and the water drains quickly.
- **Check the connections.** Sometimes the connections get loose, especially if you frequently use the disposal. Look under the sink a few times each year, and tighten all of the connections. If you notice any standing water, you may have a leak. Call out a plumber to resolve the problem for you.