Fixing Low\nWater Pressure

FREE DIY GUIDE

Introduction

Low water pressure can make everyday tasks frustrating. This guide will help you identify the cause of low water pressure and provide solutions you can try before calling a plumber.

Step 1: Determine the Scope

First, figure out if the problem affects your entire house or just one fixture:\n\n- Test multiple faucets throughout your home\n- Check both hot and cold water\n- Note which fixtures are affected\n\nIf only one fixture has low pressure, the problem is localized. If multiple fixtures are affected, the issue is likely with your main supply.

Fix 1: Clean the Aerator

If only one faucet has low pressure, the aerator is likely clogged with mineral deposits.

Step 1:

Unscrew the aerator from the end of the faucet spout.

Step 2:

Disassemble the aerator and note the order of the parts.

Step 3:

Soak all parts in white vinegar for 30 minutes to dissolve mineral deposits.

Step 4:

Scrub with an old toothbrush.

Step 5:

Rinse thoroughly and reassemble.

Step 6:

Screw the aerator back onto the faucet.

Fix 2: Clean the Showerhead

Showerheads can also become clogged with mineral deposits.

Step 1:

Remove the showerhead by turning it counterclockwise.

Step 2:

Soak it in a solution of equal parts white vinegar and water for several hours or overnight.

Step 3:

Use a toothpick or small brush to clear individual spray holes.

Step 4:

Rinse thoroughly and reinstall.

Step 5:

Alternatively, fill a plastic bag with vinegar, secure it over the showerhead with a rubber band, and let it soak overnight without removing the head.

Fix 3: Check the Water Heater Shut-Off Valve

If only hot water has low pressure, check the shut-off valve on your water heater.

Step 1:

Locate the shut-off valve on the cold water supply line to the water heater.

Step 2:

Ensure it is fully open by turning it counterclockwise.

Step 3:

Test the hot water pressure at a faucet.

Fix 4: Check the Main Shut-Off Valve

If your whole house has low pressure, the main shut-off valve may not be fully open.

Step 1:

Locate your main water shut-off valve (usually near the water meter).

Step 2:

Ensure it is fully open.

Step 3:

For gate valves, turn counterclockwise until it stops.

Step 4:

For ball valves, the handle should be parallel to the pipe.

Fix 5: Check the Pressure Regulator

Some homes have a pressure regulator that controls water pressure from the municipal supply. If it fails, pressure can drop.

Step 1:

Locate the pressure regulator (usually near the main shut-off valve).

Step 2:

Attach a pressure gauge to an outdoor faucet.

Step 3:

Turn on the water and check the pressure. It should be between 45-60 PSI.

Step 4:

If pressure is low, the regulator may need adjustment or replacement.

Step 5:

Adjusting or replacing a pressure regulator is best left to a professional.

Other Possible Causes

- Corroded pipes: Old galvanized pipes can corrode internally, restricting flow\n- Leaks: Hidden leaks reduce overall pressure\n- Municipal supply issues: Contact your water company to check for problems in your area\n- Shared lines: If you share a water line with neighbors, their usage can affect your pressure

When to Call a Professional

Contact a licensed plumber if:\n\n- You have tried all the above fixes and still have low pressure\n- You suspect corroded pipes\n- The pressure regulator needs adjustment or replacement\n- You notice signs of hidden leaks (water stains, mold, high water bills)\n- The problem started suddenly and affects the whole house\n\nA professional plumber can perform a comprehensive inspection, test your system pressure, identify hidden leaks, and recommend solutions such as pipe replacement or pressure booster installation.