

You can make simple home repairs

Do you know these “top ten” tools?

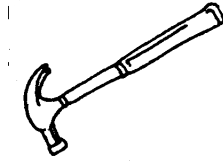
Name of tool	Uses for tool	How have you used the tool?
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.
9.	9.	9.
10.	10.	10.

Make a basic tool kit for simple home repairs

You need basic tools to make simple home repairs. You can buy a complete set of tools in a kit, or you can buy tools one at a time—as you need them. You may want to buy new or used tools. Or you may be able to borrow or rent the tools you need.

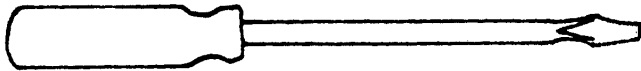
1. Claw hammer

Also called carpenter's hammer, nail hammer. Use it to drive and pull nails. A 16 oz. hammer is suggested for normal home repairs.



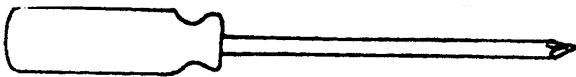
2. Flat-bladed screwdriver

Use it to drive and remove screws with straight slots.



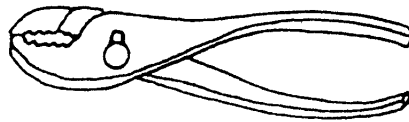
3. Phillips head screwdriver

Use it to drive and remove screws with +-shaped slots.



4. Pliers

Use it to grasp and turn objects. (Plier jaws can damage smooth surfaces.) It also can be used for cutting wire.



5. Adjustable wrench

Use it to turn nuts and bolts. Smooth jaws won't damage shiny fittings.



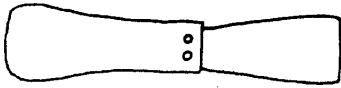
6. Utility knife

Use it to cut plastic, floor tile, cardboard, etc. It has razor-sharp, replaceable blades.



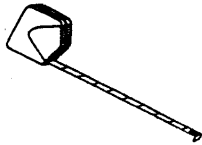
7. Putty knife

Use it to repair holes in walls.



8. Steel tape

Also called retractable tape, push-pull tape, tape rule. Use it to take measurements up to 12' long.



9. Hand drill*

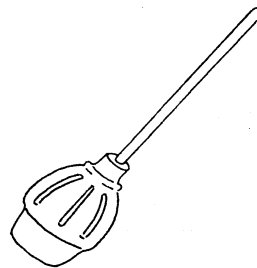
Also called eggbeater drill. Use it to drill holes less than 1/4" in diameter. It works like an eggbeater.



*Electric drills and cordless drills also are available.

10. Toilet plunger

Also called plumber's friend, suction plunger. Use it to unclog drains or toilet.



By carefully reading instructions and practicing, you can learn to make simple home repairs.

My mini-goal for making simple home repairs is:

Figure 1

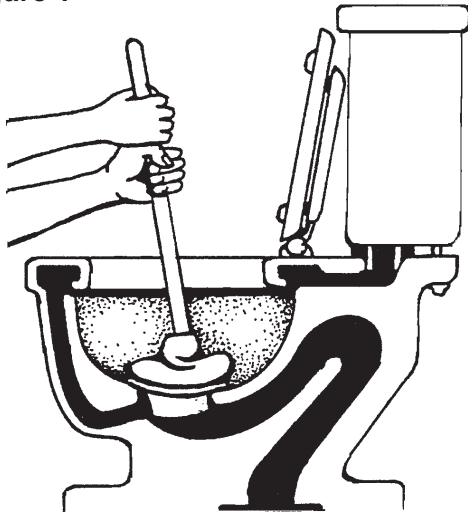
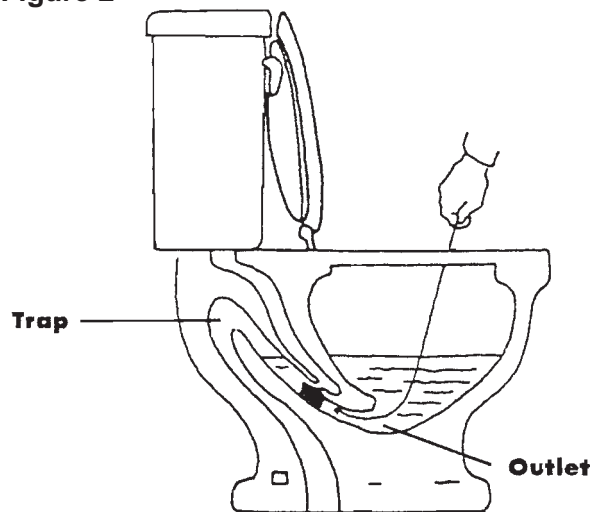


Figure 2



How to unclog a toilet

What you need

- toilet plunger
- empty can or paper cup
- wire coat hanger
- newspapers
- bucket
- plastic bread bag
- duct tape

Don't use chemical cleaners. Toilets have built-in traps that can become clogged. Chemical cleaners cannot penetrate the traps enough to be effective.

How to remove soft objects

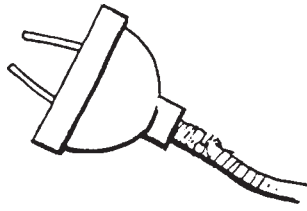
If you wait an hour or two, toilet paper and human wastes will dissolve. But you can use a toilet plunger to speed the process.

1. Use the empty can to bail out extra water from the toilet bowl. Put the water in the bucket.
2. Place the plunger over the toilet outlet (figure 1).
3. Press down slowly and pull up quickly on the plunger. This will pull the blockage back into the toilet bowl.
4. Repeat the process for 20 to 30 strokes.
5. Remove the plunger (place it on newspaper) and pour water in the bowl. If the water level does not rise too high, the clog may be gone.
6. Flush the toilet. If the water still backs up, bail out the extra water and call a plumber.
7. Dump waste water from the bucket into a working toilet.
8. Wash the plunger and put it away.
9. Throw away can and newspaper.

How to remove hard objects

Remove hard objects such as toys or hair-brushes as follows:

1. Use the empty can to bail out extra water from the toilet bowl. Put the water in the bucket.
2. Form a hook at the end of a piece of heavy wire, such as a clothes hanger.
3. Push the hook up into the toilet (figure 2).
4. Hook the object and remove it.
5. If this doesn't work, tape a plastic bread bag over your hand with duct tape.
6. Reach into the toilet and remove the object.
7. Test the toilet by flushing. If the water still backs up, use the wire hook again to see if another object is stuck in the toilet.
8. Flush again. If water still backs up, try using the plunger (see figure 1).
9. Dump waste water from the bucket into a working toilet.
10. Throw away the contaminated wire and plastic bag.



How to fix electric cords

What you need

- new plug, if your old one can't be used (buy one with a UL label)
- flat-bladed screwdriver
- utility knife

How to do it

1. Unplug the lamp or appliance.
2. Cut the cord off at the damaged part (figure 1).
3. Remove the insulation cover (figure 2).
4. Slip the plug back on the cord (figure 3).
5. Clip and separate the inner wires (figure 4).
6. You may want to tie an Underwriters' knot to help keep the wires from pulling out (figure 5).
7. Remove a half-inch of the insulation from the end of the wires with a utility knife or razor blade. Try not to cut any of the small wires (figure 6).
8. Twist the small wires together, clockwise (figure 7).
9. Pull the knot down firmly in the plug (figure 8).
10. Pull out wire around each terminal to the screw (figure 9).
11. Wrap the wire around the screw, clockwise (figure 10).
12. Tighten the screw. Insulation should come to the screw but not under it (figure 11).
13. Place the insulation cover back over the plug (figure 12).

Figure 1

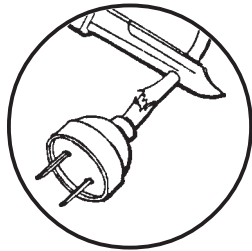


Figure 2

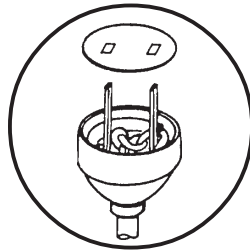


Figure 3

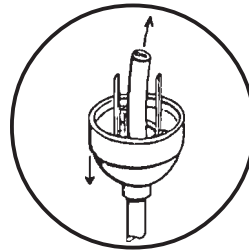


Figure 4

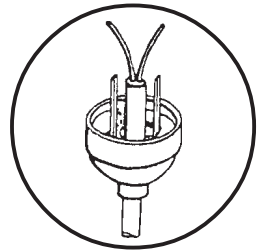


Figure 5

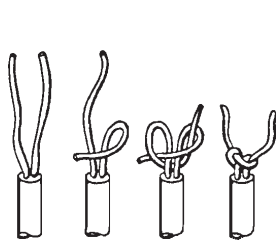


Figure 6

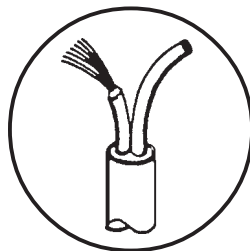


Figure 7

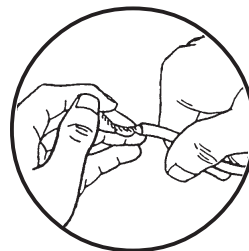


Figure 8

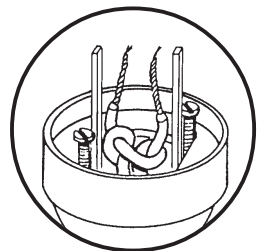


Figure 9

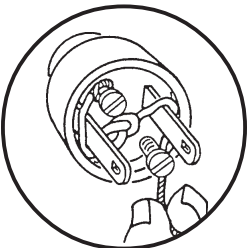


Figure 10

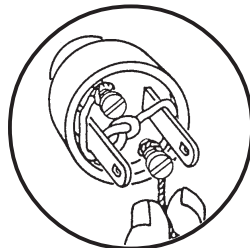


Figure 11

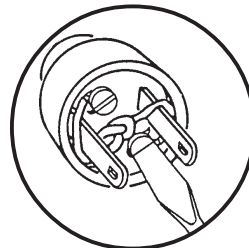
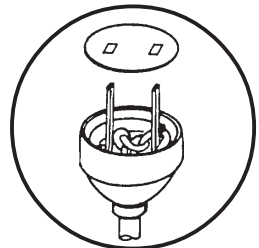


Figure 12



How to stop air leaks around windows

What you need

- interior storm window kit *or* double-face tape and roll or length of shrink film
- scissors or utility knife
- hair dryer

This process is meant for interiors only. Use these materials on painted or varnished wood, aluminum, or vinyl-clad molding. (However, tape may pull off cracked or peeling paint and varnish when removed.) Do *not* use these materials on wallpaper, wallboard, plaster, veneer paneling, or luan mahogany molding.

How to do it

1. For windows with interior mounted shades or blinds, pull to desired position before attaching shrink film.
2. Remove cranks or handles that stick out before attaching film.
3. Wash the frame around the window to remove grease and dirt, and dry thoroughly.
4. Apply a strip of double-face tape either around the outer edge of the window frame and on the bottom of sills that stick out, or on the face of the frame (figure 1).
5. Press the tape firmly to make sure it sticks securely.
6. Wait 15 minutes after applying the tape before installing the film.
7. Unfold film and cut it to size, allowing at least 1 inch extra on all four sides.
8. Peel the backing paper from the tape across the top of the frame to expose the second adhesive side (figure 2).
9. Starting at top molding, *lightly* press the film to the tape (figure 3).
10. Remove the backing from the tape across the bottom of the frame and attach the plastic sheet.
11. Repeat the process for the sides. The film may be removed and repositioned if necessary.
12. Press the film securely to the tape.
13. Turn on a hand-held hair dryer to its highest setting.
14. Start at an upper corner, hold the dryer about 1 inch from the surface, and slowly move the dryer across the film. Be careful not to touch the plastic with the hot dryer.
15. When the film starts to shrink, move the dryer slowly across the surface until all wrinkles and creases disappear.
16. Trim extra film with scissors or a utility knife.
17. The film can be cleaned with a damp soft cloth.
18. At the end of the heating season, remove the film and tape promptly.

Figure 1

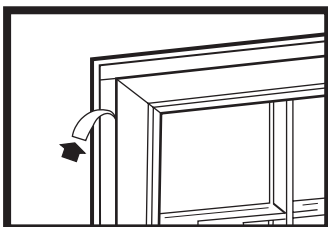


Figure 2

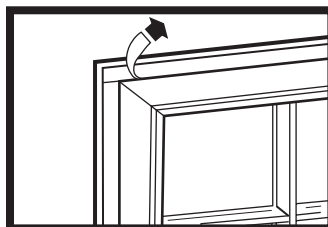


Figure 3



How to replace a fuse

What you need

- rubber mat
- flashlight
- new fuse of same capacity and type as the one that blew—either screw-in (figure 1) or cartridge (figure 2)

How to do it

1. Disconnect all lamps and appliances on the blown circuit.
2. If the fuse box is in a damp area, be sure your hands are dry and you are standing on a rubber mat.
3. Turn off the power by lifting or pulling the main switch level (figure 3-a) to the “off” position. If yours is like figure 3-b, remove the pull-out section.
4. Remove the blown fuse (face is black or metal strip is broken, see figure 4). The screw-type fuse unscrews counterclockwise. The cartridge-type pulls out.
5. Replace with a new fuse of the same capacity and type. (*Never* replace with a penny—this will complete the circuit, but it also may cause a fire!)
6. Turn on the main switch.
7. Throw away the blown fuse.
8. Find out what caused the fuse to blow by plugging in appliances separately. If the circuit is OK with each appliance individually, you probably had too many things plugged in. If any one appliance causes the fuse to blow, get the appliance repaired or replaced.

Figure 1

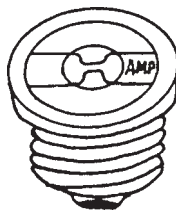


Figure 2



Figure 3

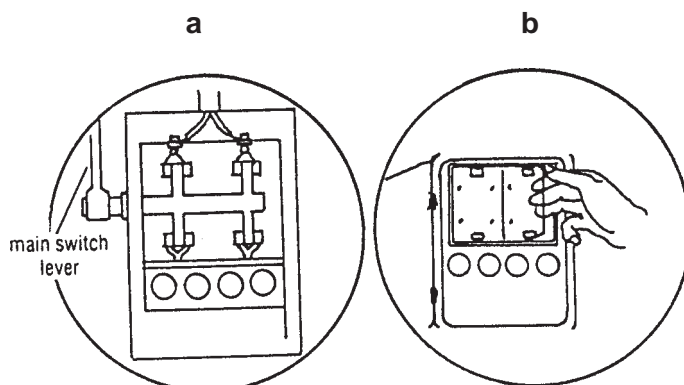
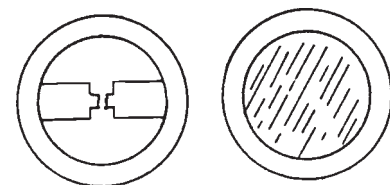


Figure 4



How to reset a circuit breaker

What you need

- rubber mat
- flashlight

How to do it

1. Disconnect all lamps and appliances on the tripped circuit.
2. If the circuit breaker panel is in a damp area, be sure your hands are dry and you are standing on a rubber mat.
3. Find the switch in the circuit breaker panel that is in the “off” or middle position (figure 1).
4. If it is in the middle position, turn to “off.”
5. Flip the switch to “on” (figure 2).
6. Find out what caused the circuit to trip by plugging in appliances separately. If the circuit is OK with each appliance individually, you probably had too many things plugged in. If any one appliance causes the circuit to trip, get the appliance repaired or replaced.

Figure 1

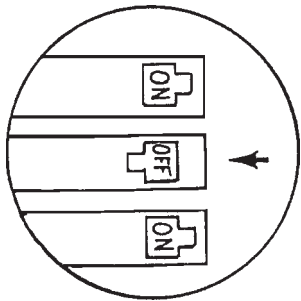
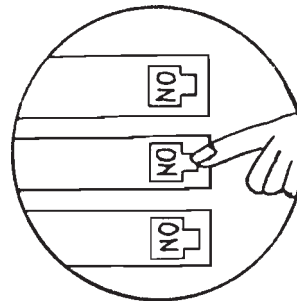


Figure 2



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