



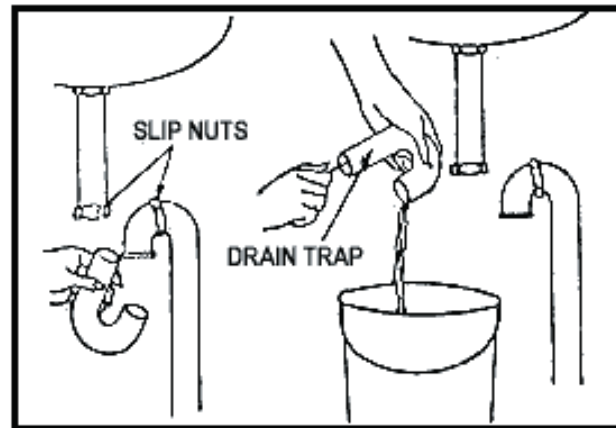
Maintaining the Home

Fixing Plugged Sink or Lavatory Drains

Maintaining the Home: Fixing Plugged Sink or Lavatory Drains

If all other sink and toilet drains are open the blockage is probably local.

1. Check the stopper for accumulations of hair, soap and other foreign material. If a plain rubber stopper is used the accumulation is probably on the grate in the drainpipe just below the stopper. Proceed as described for slow emptying lavatories.
2. Some mechanical stoppers can just be pulled out, others can be lifted, turned and raised, still others require disassembling the unit. Take the stopper out and remove all hair and foreign material.
3. If the stopper will not come out you have a more difficult problem. Remove the trap below the sink as described in Step 4. Also remove as much of the pipe to the bowl as possible. Now with a wire with a short hook, clean the hair out by working both from below and above the sink.
4. After the bowl drain is free, remove the bottom of the trap below the lavatory by turning the two large nuts. The nuts are on the pipes so turn them counter-clockwise as you look at them from the pipes. Be sure to put a bucket under the trap to catch the water which accumulates in the trap. Clean out the trap with hot soapy water. ([Vis. 1](#))



5. Insert a plumber's "spring snake" into the drain pipe and turn it as it goes into the pipe. There is usually a hook on the tip which will catch on whatever is in the pipe. If and when you feel it catch, pull it back out. Do not try to push it through. Usually a plumbing fixture is within 5 or 6 feet from a vertical pipe so if the snake goes through to this pipe you can feel it on the snake and the system should drain.

*This resource is one in a series on **Maintaining the Home** which include:*

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