




How to Unclog a Bathtub Drain Without Chemicals

Simply fish out the sticky hair that clogs most drains



 Time	 Complexity	 Cost
An hour or less	Beginner	Less than \$20

Introduction

Fix a clogged tub drain quickly and easily by removing the stopper and fishing out the hair and gunk that causes the problem about 80 percent of the time. Here's how to open and unclog the most common drain types.

Tools Required

- 4-in-1 screwdriver
- Needle-nose pliers
- Utility knife

Materials Required

- Heavy wire or coat hanger to bend into hook.

About 80 percent of the time, you can fix slow-draining or clogged tub drains in about five minutes, without chemicals and without a \$100 plumber bill. In most cases, you'll only need a screwdriver and a stiff wire or a bent coat hanger. The problem is usually just a sticky wad of hair that collects on the crossbars, a few inches under the stopper. All you need to do is figure out how to remove the stopper (that's almost always easy) and fish out the gunk.

Follow our series of photos to determine which type of tub drain stopper you have and how to remove it.

How to Remove a Drop Stopper

- Simply unscrew the stopper from the set screw.
 - **Note:** A drop stopper has a prominent knob that you lift and turn to open the drain. It has a setscrew located under the cap.







How to Remove Push/Lock Drain Stopper

- Push down on the stopper to release it and open the drain.
 - **Note:** *These stoppers lock and seal when you press them down and release when you push down a second time.*
- Remove the stopper by holding onto the stem while unscrewing the cap.
- Otherwise, simply remove the entire shaft by unscrewing it.
 - **Pro tip:** *You may have to adjust the screw tension on the stem when you reinstall everything to get a good seal.*





How to Remove a Levered Stopper

- **Note:** Many tubs, especially older ones, have a stopper located inside the drain and overflow tube. Most of these have a lever on the overflow plate and a screen over the drain.
- Remove the screen and clean the crossbars.
- Unscrew the overflow plate, pull out the linkage, clean the stopper and linkage, and rinse the drainpipes.
- Readjust the linkage if necessary.
 - **Pro tip:** Occasionally the linkage is out of adjustment and the stopper doesn't open far enough from its seat to allow a good flow. Adjust it, reinsert it and test it. Run water into the tub. If it leaks out, lengthen the stopper linkage to seal the drain better. If the drain doesn't open to let the water out, shorten the stopper linkage.







Clear Out the Clog

- Bend a little hook on the end of a stiff wire (or a coat hanger) with a pair of needle-nose pliers and shove it through the clog.
- Pull out the hair clog.
- Repeat this step if needed.
- If hair is wrapped around the crossbars, slice through it with a utility knife and then grab it with the wire.

