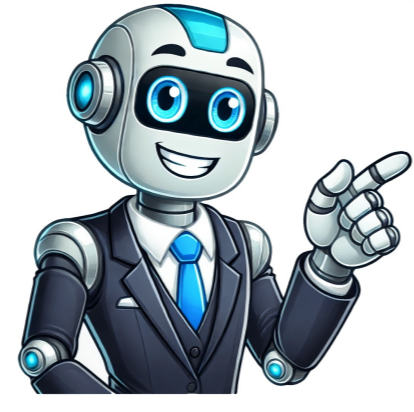


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Download Article Skip the plumber and save yourself some money by clearing your exterior drain yourself Download Article Notice an odd smell coming from a drain? Water pooling up around an outdoor drain after a heavy storm? Unfortunately, you probably have a clog. The good news is that this isn't a particularly serious problem and tons of people run into this issue all the time. Luckily, there are plenty of easy ways to deal with this problem yourself. Read on to learn how to clear your outdoor drains. Pop the cover of your drain off and run a drain auger down the drain to break up any serious clogs. If your drain is slow, pour baking soda and vinegar down it to clean the pipe and remove any gunk that's slowing things down. To keep blockages from recurring, clean your drain and drain cover regularly. 1.Lift the grate covering your drain with a screwdriver. If there are screws or fasteners holding the drain in place, remove them with the appropriate screwdriver. Otherwise, stick the end of a flathead screwdriver in between the openings of the grate. Bend the screwdriver back to pry the grate away from the drain. Set the grate aside while working inside your drain.Put on elbow-length rubber gloves before you begin if you'd like to keep your hands and arms clean.If the drain has a solid top, pry it up from the edge instead.If the grate is heavy, you may need to use a grate hook (aka a drain key) to lift it. Slip the end of the hook under the grate and lift it up. 2.Remove the blockage from your drain by hand if you can see it. If your hands fit inside of the drain and you notice any obstructions, reach into the water and see if you can break apart the clog. Scoop out any debris and throw it away in a trash can. Keep scooping out the clog until you can pick up anymore. 1.]Leaves, twigs, and bits of trash are all easy to remove by hand.If the blockage is just barely out of sight or you don't want to get your hands dirty, use a bent wire hanger to grab whatever is blocking your drain. Advertisement 3Use a drain auger to break apart clogs you can't reach. Drain augers (aka snakes, or drain rods) are long flexible plumbing tools used to break apart blockages deep within the pipes. Feed the end of the auger into your drain, using short bursts to force it further down. Once the rod is in the drain pipe, spin it clockwise to break apart the clog.[2] There's a solid obstruction, pull out the rod and use the corkscrew attachment instead of the plunger.If you find branches or clumps of dirt, don't be alarmed—they're typical for exterior drains. Stuff just pours in over time, it doesn't mean the drain is broken. 4Pour water and bleach into the drain to rinse out any additional debris. Spray the drain opening with 1 gallon (3.8L) of water using your hose to test the drainage and to get rid of any loose material. Use 12 cups (2404.7mL) of undiluted chlorine bleach to neutralize any smells and to break apart any residual obstructions. If the drain still runs slow, use your drain auger until it works again. If you still can't get it to work, you may need to call a professional. Advertisement 1Pour 1 cup (208 g) of baking soda into the drain. Remove the grate on top of your drain so the baking soda can get into your pipes. Measure out 1 cup (208 g) of baking soda and pour it directly into the drain.[3] If your drain is completely clogged, use a snake to break the clog apart first before you do this.This is a 100% natural way to clean and clear out your drain. Unlike chemical drain cleaners, this won't put any strain on your pipes. 2Add 1 c (240mL) of vinegar to the drain if you start a reaction. After the baking soda, pour white distilled vinegar in the drain. The vinegar will start to bubble and react with the baking soda as soon as theyre together. [4]Let the mixture sit in your drain for 30 minutes. The baking soda and vinegar will naturally break down all of the material that's stuck in your drain. You can wait even longer if you'd like, or add a second round of vinegar and baking soda if it still looks like your drain is a little slow to empty.[5] If there's a chance of rain, cover the drain with a rag or plug so the vinegar and baking soda don't rinse out. 4Dump a pot of boiling water into the drain to rinse everything out. Fill a large pot with water and bring it to a boil on your stove. Throw on some oven mitts and carefully carry the pot outside to the drain. Slowly pour the water into the drain. The water will lift any loose material inside your pipes and help clean everything out. [6] If you don't have vinegar and baking soda, feel free to use boiling water on its own. The heat should be enough to break up some blockages. Adding 1 cup (240 mL) of drain with a screen or dome to prevent large debris from falling in. Drain screens are protective grates or meshes used to keep leaves and other debris out of your pipes. Set the screen or dome over your drain so it collects any possible obstructions. Clean your drain screens after especially heavy storms to remove any obstructions and snake the drain lines at least once a year to remove any debris buildup. 2Clean out the drain once a month so clogs cannot form. Try to clean your drains frequently, even if they aren't clogged. Either use a snake to break apart small obstructions or use a baking soda and vinegar treatment. With monthly maintenance, your outdoor drains won't clog.[7] If you have severe storms, check your drains the following day to see if there is any debris stuck in the drain. 3Use a biological enzyme cleaner when your drain is running slow. Biological enzymes use natural bacteria to break down organic materials in your pipes. Wait until a clear evening when you aren't expecting rain in your area. Pour the entire bag of the enzyme into your drain and let it work overnight. [8] Enzyme cleaners are safe to use with septic tank lines since they won't harm the helpful bacteria. If you have a clog in a septic drain, try enzyme cleaners before any harsh chemicals. Advertisement Ad New Question Question How can I clear a drain outside on my own? David Balkan Professional PlumberDavid Balkan is a Professional Plumber, CEO of Balkan Sewer and Water Main Service, and President of Balkan Sewer and Drain Cleaning. As a hands-on owner of these companies for over 40 years, David is knowledgeable about water service lines, sewers, and drain line issues. I've cleared a drain outside on my own? David Balkan Professional PlumberDavid Balkan is a Professional Plumber, CEO of Balkan Sewer and Water Main Service, and President of Balkan Sewer and Drain Cleaning. As a hands-on owner of these companies for over 40 years, David is knowledgeable about water service lines, sewers, and drain line issues. Dav is a Committee Chairman of the Master Plumbers Council and has sat on the Executive Committee of the Sub Surface Plumbers Association of New York for over 30 years. His knowledge and solution-oriented approach contributed to Balkan Sewer and Water Main Service being the largest and most trusted service in New York City and the recipient of the 2017 Angies List Super Service Award. You really need to call a professional for that. The lines are larger outside, so you really need a professional-sized snake. If that doesn't work, the professional can use any tools, like high-pressure water jets. Question Can I use apple cider vinegar and baking soda to clear my drain? Staff Answer This answer was written by one of our trained team of researchers who validated the accuracy and comprehensiveness of this answer. The safe way to white vinegar will. You can try it. It's probably not going to do anything to your pipes, but we're not very confident this combination will do the trick. Question How do you have water in the stormwater celler how do you get the baking soda and vinegar down the pipe? wikiHow Staff Answer This answer was written by one of our trained team of researchers who validated it for accuracy and comprehensiveness. You wouldn't use baking soda and vinegar in that scenario. Your blockage is completely preventing water from draining, so you have to use a drain auger. See more answers Ask a Question Advertisement Thanks Advertisement This article was co-authored by David Balkan and by wikiHow staff writer, Eric McClure. David Balkan is a Professional Plumber, CEO of Balkan Sewer and Water Main Service, and President of Balkan Sewer and Drain Cleaning. As a hands-on owner of these companies for over 40 years, David is knowledgeable about water service lines, sewers, and drain line issues. Dav is a Committee Chairman of the Master Plumbers Council and has sat on the Executive Committee of the Sub Surface Plumbers Association of New York for over 30 years. His knowledge and solution-oriented approach contributed to Balkan Sewer and Water Main Service being the largest and most trusted service in New York City and the recipient of the 2017 Angies List Super Service Award. This article has been viewed 273,709 times. Co-authors: 7. Updated: April 14, 2025 Views: 273,709 Categories: Featured Articles | Blocked Drains PrintSend fan mail to authors Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 273,709 times. "I just learned that items like baking soda and vinegar can help unclog a drain, which is fantastic because I always have them around the house. Thank you!". " more Share your story A blocked drain is a drainage problem that requires an immediate fix to avoid having backup into the inside drains. While there are many procedures that can unblock a drain, using a drain rod is definitely the most common and oftentimes, the easiest method for unblocking a drain. Using a drain rod requires attaching enough rods together to reach the entire perimeter of the drain. The rod is meant to be removed around to locate the debris causing the blockage to get the water started flowing smoothly again. Once a drain has been unclogged with a rod, the debris can be removed with a drain jetting. In this article, we will explore everything there is to know about drain rods. How effectively they are, what they can be used for, and any associated problems that can come with using a drain rod based on the type of drain issue you are having. How Do You Unblock an Outdoor Drain with a Rod?The process of removing an outside blockage is a relatively easy. It just requires some patience and a good set of tools for the job. You will want to invest in a quality drain rod, a sturdy pair of gloves, a pressure hose, and a heady dose of perseverance. Some outdoor blockages can be minuscule in severity, some can be stubborn, and some can take some colossal elbow grease to get moving. Another important factor to take into consideration is the types of debris that can cause outdoor blockages. Most often, exterior drains become blocked due to severe storms that cause flooding, which can create thick blockages of mud and silt in addition to larger debris items such as leaves and tree limbs. Toilet drains, septic tanks, and sewers will require a bit more observation and work to clear, but the process will work if you stick with it. Once a rod is attached and ready, you will want to use a drainage rod to sift around the debris. This can serve two different purposes: this allows you to measure just how deep the blockage is, as well as to shift the blockage to break the mud and silt into a more pliable texture. It is also essential to probe the rod deep down into the drainage canal and twist counter-clockwise to loosen the debris. Once you have the mud and silt loosened, and a large amount of it removed, you can then begin to use a pressure hose to clear the remaining clog. Aim the hose on the drainage reservoir and blast the mud and silt away from the canal. Keep doing this until the water is running clear, by which you have successfully removed an outdoor drainage blockage filled with mud and silt. How Do You Rod a Drain Pipe?The rodding process is generally the same regardless, but there can be some different modifications if you need to rod something like a drain pipe. To effectively rod a drainpipe and unblock drain obstructions, always make sure you attach enough rodding to cover the length of the pipe you are working with. Directly to the drain rod through the pipe means you will usually know if you are hitting the obstruction or if resistance is met. However, you may have just met a bend in the pipe, which means you need to twist the rod around and keep going. Blocked drains can be frustrating, but they can be resolved. If you are experiencing a blocked drain, there are several things you can do to clear it. Therefore, you simply need to do everything you can with the auger of the rod to sift around the blockage and cause it to move and break apart. Keep pushing forward and backward and to the side to break up the blockage. Make sure you never turn the rod anticlockwise, as this will unscrew the attachments and lead to an even bigger problem with a stuck rod in the piping. If there are no other issues with the drainpipe, the plunging effect with the auger end of the rod will usually break up the blockage and the debris will then run through the pipe as it is supposed to. Can Drain Rods Go Round Bends?As previously mentioned, bends in the piping can cause some unwanted problems when it comes to rodding a drain. First, this typically means that you have a blockage that is further down the line, which will require moving the rod around bends and traps sometimes. Make sure that you use a highly flexible drain rod that can bend and adapt to the contours of the pipes. It is certainly possible to get around the bends, but just be sure you are using the right kind of rod. If ever in doubt, consult with a drain professional. Can You Use Drain Rods Down the Toilet?A drain rod can certainly be used to remove blockages in the toilet. These kinds of blockages will generally require a bit more force and a longer rod to remove the blockage than what a regular plunger can provide. To avoid any water from splashing back onto the floor, you may want to make slow and steady plunges once the plunging auger is into the mouth of the drain pipe. Just keep plunging the auger until the toilet flushes clearly and any backup flows smoothly. The Problems with Using Drain RodsDrain rods are great for unblocking drain issues and to wash away and remove any obstructions. But unblocking drains with a drain rod can sometimes cause problems, and this is almost always that the rods can get stuck or break off into the drain pipes. Learning how to use drain rods and understanding how to adapt the tools properly is essential. Once a rod has become stuck, you now have the original blockage and a stuck drain rod on your hands, which means it's time to call a professional. Why Use a Professional to Clear Your Drain?Unblocking a drain with a rod can be an easy or a complex task. There are many different types of structures and particles that can cause exterior drains to clog, therefore a diagnosis of the type of blockage will allow you to proceed accordingly. Sewage drain blockage is best suited for professionals to handle. While you can usually expect to have great success with using a rod effectively on your own, the problems with detached and stuck drain rods can cause problems to escalate, which means you will likely have to call out a professional anyway. In short, always allow a professional to unblock drains since all the required tools can be used effectively and the blocked drain can run clear to the best of its ability, not just a quick fix. Frequently Asked QuestionsHow Flexible Are Drain Rods?Not all drain rods are going to be able to clear every blocked drain and wash away the debris effectively. It is always best to use a flexible drain rod that can reach way back into the pipe if need be. A rod that is bendable and flexible enough to reach about bends and twists in the pipe may be the best option to consider unless the blockage is very near to the surface. Bendable rods are designed to replace more traditional rods that can only work vertically. You may need to use a bendable set of rods if you are rodding a drain inside the home, like a toilet. How Do You Unblock a Drain Without a Rod?Using a rod is not always going to solve the problem completely, and may even make the blocked drain even worse. With this in mind, a procedure like a drain jetting may be the perfect solution. Drain jetting is an optimal procedure for blocked drains due to the flexibility of the jetting hose, which can contour to a wide range of corners and tight spaces, as opposed to bulkier equipment. It takes an adequate amount of experience to effectively navigate the jetting hose, therefore a CCTV drain survey is also beneficial during the jetting process to have an effective visual guide during the process. Additionally, the water pressure needs to be powerful enough to remove the debris causing the blocked drain. The nozzle attached to the hose effectively increases the water pressure to a point where the high-pressure water can shoot out of the nozzle with enough power to move debris. Final ThoughtsDrain rods are great tools to use to remove blockages, yet you may need more complex services if the blockage is too deep or the set of rods you have are not flexible enough. KJC Drainage can find solutions to this common problem with rods and much more. We pride ourselves on delivering the most comprehensive and industry-specific standards of excellence to every job we take on. When you contact us, rather you choose to call us or email us, our commitment to excellence begins with a friendly and personable conversation to answer all of your initial questions thoroughly and effectively. Drain rodding is an essential skill for any homeowner or DIY enthusiast. Understanding how to use a drain rod effectively can save you time, money, and prevent the hassle of dealing with a blocked drain. In this comprehensive guide, we'll explore everything you need to know about drain rodding, from the basics of how to use drain rods to advanced techniques for clearing stubborn blockages. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a complete novice, this article will provide valuable insights and practical tips to help you tackle drain blockages like a pro. Drain rodding is a method used to clear blocked drains and pipes. It involves using a series of rods, typically made from a highly flexible material, which are screwed together and fed into the drain to dislodge and remove blockages. The flexibility of the rods allows them to navigate the twists and turns of drainage systems, making them an effective tool for clearing blockages caused by debris, grease, fat, and other obstructions. Choosing the Right Equipment for RoddingSelecting the right kind of rod is crucial for effective drain clearing. A highly flexible drain rod is best suited for navigating bends and adapting to different types of structures within the drainage system. Additionally, attachments such as a plunger or a corkscrew can be attached to the rod to help break up and remove stubborn blockages. Are drain rods flexible? Drain rods are not flexible. They are usually made of rigid materials such as steel or fiberglass. This allows them to be sturdy and strong enough to maneuver through the pipes and clear any blockages. The lack of flexibility also helps ensure that they do not get stuck or bend inside the drain. What can I use instead of a drain rod? Instead of a drain rod, you can use alternative tools like a drain auger or a plunger. A drain auger, also known as a plumbing snake, is designed to reach deep into the drain and break up clogs. A plunger can create pressure to dislodge blockages by using suction and force. How to open a drain rodding point? To open a drain rodding point, first, locate the access point usually found in the ground or wall. Remove the cover using a screwdriver or other tool, being careful not to damage it. Insert a drain rod or plumbing snake into the opening, slowly rotating it clockwise to dislodge any blockages. Once the blockage is cleared, replace the cover securely. Jetting and rodding are two methods used for cleaning drainage systems. Jetting involves using high-pressure water to clear blockages and remove debris from pipes, while rodding uses a long flexible rod or auger to break up clogs and push them through the pipe. Both methods are effective, but jetting is often more thorough and can clean larger pipes more effectively. Are drain rods effective at unblocking drains? Drain rods can be an effective tool for unblocking drains, especially for minor blockages. They are easy to use and can reach deep into the drain to remove obstructions. However, for more severe or stubborn blockages, professional assistance may be required. It is important to handle drain rods with care to avoid causing any damage to the drains. Before attempting to unblock a drain, it's important to wear the right safety gear. Gloves and a suitable suit can protect you from harmful bacteria and debris. Locating the blockage is also a key step. This might involve some initial investigation, such as checking the exterior drainage system or using a CCTV survey to pinpoint the problem area. Locating the Blockage: Tips and TricksTo effectively locate a blockage, start by checking the most common problem areas, such as bends in the pipes or areas where debris is likely to accumulate. Sometimes, the symptoms of a blockage, like slow draining or bad odors, can help you identify its location. The Step-by-Step Guide to Using Drain RodsHow to Insert the Drain RodBegin by screwing together enough rods to reach the blockage. Carefully insert the drain rod into the pipe, using a twisting motion to help it navigate bends and push through any resistance. It's important to proceed with caution to avoid damaging the pipes or fixtures for clearing blockages. Once you reach the blockage, use a combination of pushing, twisting, and plunging motions to break it apart and clear the pipe. For stubborn blockages, attachments like a plunger or corkscrew can be used to provide extra force and agitation. Troubleshooting Common Issues in Drain RoddingWhat to Do When Your Drain Rods Get StuckIf your drain rods become stuck, don't panic. Gently twist and pull the rods to try and free them. If they remain stuck, you may need to unscrew sections of the rod or use additional tools to retrieve them. How to Identify and Resolve Stubborn BlockagesStubborn blockages may require more than just manual rodding. In such cases, using a high-pressure water jet can help break up the obstruction. If the blockage persists, a professional plumber may need to be contacted for more advanced solutions like excavation or repair. Advanced Drain Rodding TechniquesUsing High-Pressure Water JetsHigh-pressure water jets can be an effective way to clear blockages, especially those caused by grease or fat. The force of the water helps to break up and wash away the obstruction, providing a thorough cleaning of the pipe. CCTV Surveys and Drain RoddingFor complex blockages, a CCTV survey can provide a clear view of the inside of the pipes, helping to identify the exact location and nature of the blockage. This information can be invaluable in determining the best approach to clearing the blockage. Maintenance and Prevention: Keeping Your Drains ClearRegular Cleaning and Maintenance TipsRegular maintenance, such as flushing the drains with hot water or using natural cleaners, can help prevent blockages. Avoid pouring grease and fat down the drain, as these can solidify and cause clogs. Preventing Future BlockagesTo prevent future blockages, be mindful of what goes down your drains. Installing drain strainers can help catch debris, and regular inspections can catch potential problems before they escalate. SummaryDrain rodding is a flexible and effective method for clearing blocked drains. Choosing the right equipment and understanding the techniques are key to successful drain clearing. Safety and preparation are crucial before attempting to rod a drain. Stubborn blockages may require advanced techniques like high-pressure water jets or professional assistance. Regular maintenance and careful use can help prevent future blockages. Mastering the art of drain rodding not only equips you with the skills to tackle common household problems but also ensures the efficient and smooth functioning of your home's drainage system. With the right tools and techniques, and preventive measures, you can keep your drains flowing freely and avoid the inconvenience of blockages. Don't let stubborn drain blockages disrupt your daily routine any longer. Contact us today to schedule our expert Drain Rodding service. Knowing how to unblock drains outside can stop those unpleasant smells wafting in from outdoors and make sure that your waste is carried away to the water mains. Drains are there to serve a purpose and to keep it that way they can need a little maintenance and looking after. If you're moving into a new home it's a good idea to get a drainage survey done to check all is well. But even if your drains are in good condition they can still get clogged up, especially if you are putting too much toilet roll, wipes and other items that dont break down into the pipes. But even if you are careful with what goes into your drains, age and nature can still join in and create unwanted blockages. Here we tell you what you need to know to get rid of any blockages. Drains get blocked for different reasons, some are easier than others to identify and rectify. But if you are having problems with your outside drains it's likely one of the following reasons will be the cause. You may like 1. Blocked drain gridCheck the pipework on the outside of your home and you will see pipes from your bathroom and kitchen typically direct to an outside drain that has a small drain grid cover like this QUERGO Square Drain Cover from Amazon. This is to stop leaves and larger objects getting into the pipework below ground. Over time leaves, dirt, debris and washing machine dregs can accumulate making the drain cover ineffective, causing any water to flow into the ground around the drain. 2. Food waste, fat and oilFood waste and oil and fat from cooking can travel to outside drains and accumulate to create hard balls of waste. As oil and fat cools it will congeal and mix with food waste to become hard and this often happens in outside drains. 3. Collapsed drainThe older the pipework in drains the more susceptible it is to collapse. When a drain pipe cracks, or breaks, the weight of the soil can cause the drain pipework to collapse. The soil will then seep into the pipework causing a blocked drain. Tree root damageTree roots may not have been anywhere near drains when the pipework was originally laid. However, as a tree grows its roots spread and can come into contact with pipework. The roots can force its way into cracks and joints, attracting waste, which can build up and cause a blockage. 5. Toilet roll overflowToilet paper is designed to dissolve in water, but if you use too much toilet roll on a regular basis it can take longer to break down. The more this happens the more likely clumps of toilet paper are to form. This can then cause a build up eventually leading to a blockage. Can I unblock a drain myself? Yes, you can probably unblock an outside drain on your own explains Mark McShane Plumbing, Heating, Electrical & Renewables Expert at Boiler Cover UK. You must identify where the blockage lies and use a plunger, drain rod, or a plumbers snake to dislodge the debris. He recommends that, you should wear protective gloves and eyewear at all times. If the problem is something simple like the drain grid is covered with leaves and debris then you can remove, clean and replace. If food waste and fat or toilet rolls are an issue, you should be able to remove them with a drain auger or drain rods. To help stop the problem make sure to dispose of food waste and oil properly and use less toilet roll and always flush. However, if the problem is more serious and you don't have the tools or simply don't want to tackle the bigger issues you should call in a professional to sort the problem. Before you tackle a drain blockage you will need to invest in a few tools to get the job done. Long rubber gloves, a drain snake, or drain rods like this Faithfull FAIRSETT1 Drain Rod Set from Amazon and protective gear are the essentials. 1. Gear up and get the cover offFirst get your protective gear on and lift off the drain cover and put it to one side. You might need a specialist tool or a crowbar to lift before picking up. If the drain cover hasnt been removed for years you might need a screwdriver to remove debris from around the edges. 2. Assess where the blockage liesIf you can see the blockage, then you can remove it by hand (with gloves might be sensible). If the drain is full of water this typically means that the blockage comes after the chamber - so away from the house. If the drain chamber doesnt have any water in it and you cant visibly see the blockage before the chamber - towards the house - you need to use a drain rod. 3. Tool up and unblock the blockageNow fit your drain rods together and push into the pipework until you reach the blockage. Turn the rods clockwise until you feel the rods break through the blockage. Now push the rods back and forth to help break it up. Finally get a hose pipe and run clean water through the pipework to help flush out the debris. FAQsCan I use baking soda and vinegar to unblock drains? Yes you can. Using baking soda and vinegar is an often used combination to unblock drains. But it's typically for smaller blockages as McShane explains. If it is a minor blockage, then this eco-friendly method should work just fine; a severe clog may require mechanical removal or calling a plumbers emergency number. "But how do you use it? McShane explains the process. Standing over your outdoor drain, pour a pot of boiling water down the drain, followed by a half-cup of baking soda. Wait several minutes and then pour in a mixture of one cup of vinegar and one cup of hot water. Be sure to situate a lid or plate over your drain to avoid splashes; you want the reaction happening under the surface of water. This will depend on whether you decide to tackle the job yourself or call in a professional. But there are other factors as McShane reveals. Prices to remove a blockage from outside the home can vary wildly from area to area, based on the extent of the blockage, the prerequisite method to remove it, and your location. If you are tackling the job yourself you only need to pay for tools and equipment. But the outlay may not be justified if costs exceed what you would pay for a professional. McShane states, If professional plumbing services are needed, you can expect to pay between 100-400 or more. What can you expect for the money? Services may include camera inspections, hydro jetting or mechanical removal of roots and other deposits. But it's advisable to get quotes from several providers to ensure you're getting a fair price for the service needed. Need to know more about drains? Check out our What is drain snake? guide to see how they work and what they can be used for. Along with our Drainage cost guide to see how much new drains might cost you and Building Regulations Part H: Our expert guide to drainage installations to get some invaluable expert advice. Bring your drains back to life with expert advice, how to unclog drains and descale inspiration. Sign up for our newsletter and get two free tickets to a Homebuilding & Renovating Show near you. Blocked drains are inconvenient as well as a potential health hazard. If a drain backs up, you might end up with standing water in a sink or an overflowing toilet. You could also end up with raw sewage bubbling out of your sink, which is never pleasant. Drain rods can clear blockages in drains and pipes. They are versatile, effective, and relatively easy to use. Whether you are dealing with a clogged sink, toilet, or outdoor drain under a manhole cover, drain rods can loosen the blockage so water starts flowing through the pipe, which is enough for drain jetting to work. In this guide, we will walk you through why drain rods are sometimes necessary and the process of using them effectively. Drain unblocker chemicals are not going to work on an outside drain blocked by silt and debris after a major storm. While they are always suitable, in most situations, drain rods are more effective than other methods. Drain rods are suitable for any type of drain, including sinks, outside drains, and toilets. Depending on how many rods you fix together, drain rods can reach deep blockages. They are strong, flexible, and capable of pushing through tough blockages and clogs. If you dont want to call out a plumber for a small blockage, drain rods will normally fix the problem. They can also be used as a preventative measure, to keep drains clear and prevent future blockages. Drain Rods Vs. Chemical Drain UnblockersChemical drain unblockers are effective at breaking down hair, soap scum, and grease in kitchen and bathroom sinks. If you have a slow-draining bathroom sink, it may be worth trying a chemical unblocker first. However, chemicals wont work on more serious blockages and can damage pipework. In addition, chemical drain cleaners are bad for the environment and pose health risks if not handled correctly. A Step-By-Step GuideYou will need a set of drain rods, which typically consist of several interlocking rods that can be assembled to reach the desired length. Youll also need rubber gloves, overalls, a bucket, and a torch for better visibility. Identify the BlockageFirst, you must identify where the problem is, so you can remove the blockage. This will help you determine the best approach to clear it. If the clog is in a sink or toilet, it's usually fairly easy to locate the blockage. However, if it's in an outdoor drain, you may need to remove the manhole cover and inspect the pipe with a torch. Assemble the Drain RodsAssemble the drain rods by connecting them. Start with the base rod and attach the other rods as needed to reach the depth of the pipe. Make sure the rods are securely fastened to avoid them coming apart while in use. Insert the Drain RodsOnce you have the rods assembled, insert the first drain rod into the drain or pipe. Push them gently but firmly, allowing them to travel deeper into the system. It's important to maintain a steady pressure to ensure the rods continue to move forward without getting stuck. Rotate the Drain RodsOnce youve reached the blockage, turn the rods and start rotating them in a clockwise motion. This helps to break up the blockage and dislodge any debris that may be causing the blockage. Keep rotating them until you feel less resistance, or the water starts to flow again. Remove the Drain RodsOnce the clog is cleared, slowly withdraw the drain rods from the pipe. Be cautious not to pull them out too quickly, as this can cause splashing and make a mess. Keep a bucket nearby to catch any water or debris that may come out when you remove the rod. Rinse and Repeat if NecessaryAfter removing the drain rods, flush the system with water to ensure the blockage has been completely cleared. If the water drains smoothly, then the job is done. However, if there is still some resistance or the water doesnt flow freely, you may need to repeat the process a few more times. Clean Your RodsOnce the blockage has been sorted, clean your drain rods thoroughly to remove all debris and bacteria. Remember, using drain rods to unblock a drain requires patience and caution. With the right technique and tools, you can effectively clear a minor blocked drain on your own. However, if you are unsure or uncomfortable with the process, or worried about losing a drain rod down the pipe - and making the problem worse - it's always advisable to consult a drainage expert like us. If you are experiencing blocked drains First Response Drainage should be your first call we are specialist blocked drain engineers and provide emergency drain clearance 24/7 across London. Call 0800 043 4860 and get your drains unblocked. Help & Advice > Project Guides > Tools and Equipment Blocked drains are an absolute nightmare for your property. If you have a problem with your drains being blocked, you need to sort it out as soon as possible to ensure that the issue doesnt cause any lasting damage. Here you can find out how to use a drain rod to clear a blocked drain quickly and easily. Table of contents What is a drain rod? A drain rod is a tool commonly used for unblocking outdoor drains. They are popular among professionals and DIYers alike and come with many different attachments to use, depending on the type of congestion youre dealing with. The most common is a plunger which can attach to the end. Alternatively, if the blockage is stubborn, you can also opt for one or more of the following attachments to help you clear that obstruction: CorkscrewHarpoonBrushHookRotating handles are also available if needed to make the process easier. Regardless of your desired attachment, this tool typically comes in the form of a drain rod kit, giving you all options for every blocked drain eventually. Can I use my own existing drain rods? Generally, it's a good idea to purchase new drain rods if you're not sure when they were last used. Especially if you're borrowing them from someone and you are unsure how much use they've had, or how old their tools are. This is because there is a risk that the ends of the drain rods can fall off the rod or the rod can snap during use. Not great if you're already trying to remove debris from the blocked pipe in the first place. You'll likely have to spend additional costs for the removal of that piece of rod too; we dont want that! How to rod a drainOnce you know where the blockage is, using a drain rod is simple and can be done in a few basic steps. What you need: Drain rod sectionsPlungerAdditional attachments (if required)Thick rubber glovesProtective glassesProtective overallsFace maskBucket (to contain any debris pulled out from the drain for disposal). Fit together the rods. To use a drain rod, your first going to need to put the rod together. Take the separate pieces and attach them to each other. You should now have one long drainage rod. You can always remove or add sections as needed to suit the blockage in the pipe as you go. 2. Attach the plunger attachment to the end of the rod. You should be able to easily twist the plunger on the attachment end of the rod. If you need different attachments for difficult blockages, simply remove and replace them as needed. 3. Remove the manhole cover, put on your protective gear and push the plunger into the blocked drain. Here you will need a bit of the old elbow grease. Drain rods are typically easy to manoeuvre thanks to their flexibility. So, you can effortlessly bend them around to find the opening of the pipe. Once youve done so, apply pressure to the plunger to help clear the blockage. If you're using a corkscrew or similar, turn the rod clockwise to prevent the rods from coming apart. Tip: Use the corkscrew or hook attachment first to remove the more stubborn parts of the blockage, if needed, then follow up with the plunger. 4. Clear up the area. Once the blockage clears, you can use a hosepipe to wash away any leftover wastewater or debris following the unblocking and put back the manhole cover. You should be able to notice that there is a clear difference in your drainage by the water level. Its as easy as that! Youll be able to clear the drain in no time. Let us know if you liked the post. Thats the only way we can improve. Thanks for rating this article. Blocked drains are inconvenient as well as a potential health hazard. If a drain backs up, you might end up with standing water in a sink or an overflowing toilet. You could also end up with raw sewage bubbling out of your sink, which is never pleasant. Drain rods can clear blockages in drains and pipes. They are versatile, effective, and relatively easy to use. Whether you are dealing with a clogged sink, toilet, or outdoor drain under a manhole cover, drain rods can loosen the blockage so water starts flowing through the pipe, which is enough for drain jetting to work. In this guide, we will walk you through why drain rods are sometimes necessary and the process of using them effectively. Drain unblocker chemicals are not going to work on an outside drain blocked by silt and debris after a major storm. While they are always suitable, in most situations, drain rods are more effective than other methods. Drain rods are suitable for any type of drain, including sinks, outside drains, and toilets. Depending on how many rods you fix together, drain rods can reach deep blockages. They are strong, flexible, and capable of pushing through tough blockages and clogs. If you dont want to call out a plumber for a small blockage, drain rods will normally fix the problem. They can also be used as a preventative measure, to keep drains clear and prevent future blockages. Drain Rods Vs. Chemical Drain UnblockersChemical drain unblockers are effective at breaking down hair, soap scum, and grease in kitchen and bathroom sinks. If you have a slow-draining bathroom sink, it may be worth trying a chemical unblocker first. However, chemicals wont work on more serious blockages and can damage pipework. In addition, chemical drain cleaners are bad for the environment and pose health risks if not handled correctly. A Step-By-Step GuideYou will need a set of drain rods, which typically consist of several interlocking rods that can be assembled to reach the desired length. Youll also need rubber gloves, overalls, a bucket, and a torch for better visibility. Identify the BlockageFirst, you must identify where the problem is, so you can remove the blockage. This will help you determine the best approach to clear it. If the clog is in a sink or toilet, it's usually fairly easy to locate the blockage. However, if it's in an outdoor drain, you may need to remove the manhole cover and inspect the pipe with a torch. Assemble the Drain RodsAssemble the drain rods by connecting them. Start with the base rod and attach the other rods as needed to reach the depth of the pipe. Make sure the rods are securely fastened to avoid them coming apart while in use. Insert the Drain RodsOnce you have the rods assembled, insert the first drain rod into the drain or pipe. Push them gently but firmly, allowing them to travel deeper into the system. It's important to maintain a steady pressure to ensure the rods continue to move forward without getting stuck. Rotate the Drain RodsOnce youve reached the blockage, turn the rods and start rotating them in a clockwise motion. This helps to break up the blockage and dislodge any debris that may be causing the blockage. Keep rotating them until you feel less resistance, or the water starts to flow again. Remove the Drain RodsOnce the clog is cleared, slowly withdraw the drain rods from the pipe. Be cautious not to pull them out too quickly, as this can cause splashing and make a mess. Keep a bucket nearby to catch any water or debris that may come out when you remove the rod. Rinse and Repeat if NecessaryAfter removing the drain rods, flush the system with water to ensure the blockage has been completely cleared. If the water drains smoothly, then the job is done. However, if there is still some resistance or the water doesnt flow freely, you may need to repeat the process a few more times. Clean Your RodsOnce the blockage has been sorted, clean your drain rods thoroughly to remove all debris and bacteria. Remember, using drain rods to unblock a drain requires patience and caution. With the right technique and tools, you can effectively clear a minor blocked drain on your own. However, if you are unsure or uncomfortable with the process, or worried about losing a drain rod down the pipe - and making the problem worse - it's always advisable to consult a drainage expert like us. If you are experiencing blocked drains First Response Drainage should be your first call we are specialist blocked drain engineers and provide emergency drain clearance 24/7 across London. Call 0800 043 4860 and get your drains unblocked. If you are experiencing a blocked drain, it can be a major hassle and inconvenience. However, there is a simple and effective solution drain rods. Drain rods are a useful tool for clearing blockages in drains, pipes, and sewers. Whether you have a minor blockage or a more serious issue, using drain rods can help you solve the problem swiftly and cost-effectively. Step 1: Before you start using drain rods, it is essential to wear protective gloves and goggles. This will prevent any potential harm to your hands or eyes during the process. Step 2: Once you are adequately protected, assemble the drain rods by screwing them together until they form a long pole. Insert the first rod into the drain and continue adding steps until you reach the blockage. Step 3: Use a twisting motion to push the rods further into the drain, breaking up the blockage as you go. Be careful not to apply excessive pressure, as this could damage the pipes. Step 4: Once you have cleared the blockage, slowly remove the rods from the drain. Take care to clean any debris or waste clinging to the rods. JZK 6X Kitchen Bathroom Sink Drain Pipe Unblocker Tools kit, Shower Drain Hair Clog Puller Grabber Remover Catcher, Drain Cleaning Brush Flexible Long Wire... Amazon price updated: June 18, 2025 11:43 am By following these simple steps, you can easily and safely use drain rods to clear blockages and keep your drains flowing smoothly. Whether you are a homeowner or a professional plumber, having drain rods in your arsenal of tools is essential for maintaining proper drainage and avoiding costly repair bills. Please note that in more severe cases of blockages, it may be necessary to call a professional plumber to assess and solve the issue. What are drain rods? Drain rods are a simple yet effective plumbing tool used for clearing blockages in pipes and drains. They are made up of a series of interlocking rods, usually constructed from a sturdy material such as polypropylene or steel. Each rod is about a meter long and has a threaded end that allows them to be easily connected together. See also How to avoid selling your house to pay for care? These rods are commonly used by homeowners and plumbers alike to tackle stubborn blockages in their drains. Whether it's a build-up of grease, hair, or other debris, drain rods provide a practical solution to restore the flow of water through the pipes. Structure and designThe main components of drain rods include: Sink Un Blocker Blockage Toilet Plumbing Plumber Drainage Water Drain Pipe Bath Bathroom Pipes Hair Clog Puller Long Metal Spring Clearer Un-Blocker... Amazon price updated: June 18, 2025 11:43 am Flexible rods: These rods are usually made of a stiff but bendable material, allowing them to navigate through the twists and turns of the drainage system. Rod connectors: These threaded connectors enable the rods to be securely attached to one another, creating a longer rod for extended reach. End attachments: Drain rods typically come with various end attachments designed for different purposes. Examples include a plunger attachment for dislodging blockages, a corkscrew attachment for capturing debris, and a scraper attachment for cleaning the inside of pipes. Using drain rodsWhen using drain rods, it's important to take certain precautions to avoid causing damage to the pipes. Here are some general steps to follow: Locate the drain access point or inspection chamber where you can access the drainage system. Assemble the drain rods by screwing them together, ensuring they are securely connected. Insert the rods into the drain, applying gentle pressure, and rotate them clockwise to navigate through the pipe. If you encounter resistance, continue rotating the rods in both directions while applying occasional pressure to break up the blockage. Once the blockage has been cleared, remove the rods carefully from the drainage system. Clean and disinfect the rods and any attachments used before storing them away. Its worth noting that drain rods may not be suitable for all types of blockages or drainage systems. If you're unsure or dealing with particularly stubborn blockages, its advisable to consult a professional plumber for assistance. When to use drain rods? Drain rods are a useful tool for clearing blocked drains. They can be used in a variety of situations, depending on the nature of the blockage and the accessibility of the drain. Here are a few common scenarios where drain rods are effective: See also How to take viagra connect1. Minor blockagesIf you notice slow draining or gurgling sounds when using a sink or toilet, it could be a sign of a minor blockage. In such cases, drain rods can be used to dislodge the obstruction. By inserting the rods into the drain and rotating them clockwise, you can break up the blockage and restore proper flow. 2. Partial blockagesPartial blockages occur when debris such as hair, grease, or food particles accumulate in the drain, limiting the flow of water. Drain rods can be used to push through the blockage and create a pathway for water to pass. By attaching various attachments, such as a plunger or scraper, you can increase the effectiveness of the rods in dislodging the debris. 3. 50mm Double Worm Screw Head for Drain Rod - Clear Blockages in Pipes, Flush, Water, Plumbing, Site, Toilet Amazon price updated: June 18, 2025 11:43 am 3. Blocked outdoor drainsOutdoor drains are susceptible to blockages from leaves, dirt, and other debris. Drain rods are ideal for clearing such blockages, as they can reach long distances and navigate bends and corners in the drainpipe. By carefully inserting the rods into the outdoor drain, you can push the debris out and restore proper drainage. Its important to note that there are some situations where drain rods are not suitable for use. If the blockage is severe or if there is a suspected structural issue with the drain, it is best to consult a professional plumber for assistance. Additionally, drain rods should be used with caution to avoid causing further damage to the drain or pipes. Overall, drain rods are a valuable tool for DIY drain maintenance and can effectively clear minor to moderate blockages. By understanding when and how to use them properly, you can save time and money by solving simple drain problems on your own. Tips for using drain rods efficientlyWhen using drain rods, there are a few tips and tricks that can help you get the job done efficiently. Here are some things to keep in mind: See also How to cancel an event in google calendar1. Wear protective gearBefore using drain rods, its important to protect yourself by wearing gloves and waterproof clothing. Blocked drains can contain unpleasant substances, so its better to be safe than sorry. 2. Dryer Vent Cleaner - 72cm Flexible Long Rod Brush-Sewer Drain Cleaning Brush/Radiator Refrigerator/Washing Machine Cleaning Tool Coil Brush for Dirt Dust Lint... Amazon price updated: June 18, 2025 11:43 am 2. Prepare the areaBefore starting, make sure to prepare the area around the drain. Remove any obstacles or debris that might obstruct the path of the rods. This will help you have a clearer run at the blockage. 3. Use the right techniqueWhen inserting the drain rods into the drain, use a twisting motion rather than pushing straight in. This can help you avoid bends and curves in the pipework more easily. Its also a good idea to gently push and pull the rods to dislodge the blockage. Remember to take breaks in between attempts to avoid applying too much pressure to the drain rods, which could cause them to break or get stuck in the drain. 4. Maintain momentumOnce you start using the drain rods, try to maintain a steady rhythm to build momentum. This can help you push past any obstructions more effectively. If you encounter a particularly stubborn blockage, you can also try rotating the rods clockwise and anti-clockwise to loosen it. 5. Rinse and repeatAfter successfully clearing the drain, dont forget to rinse it with water to make sure that all debris is flushed away. If the drain is still not fully clear, you might need to repeat the process or consider calling a professional plumber. AUKIOPVZZ Flexible And Durable Drain Unblocker Rod For Kitchen Toilet Sewer Blockage Kitchen Toilet Sewer Blockage Hand Tool Pipe, blue, 7M Amazon price updated: June 18, 2025 11:43 am By following these tips, you can use drain rods more efficiently and increase your chances of successfully clearing a blocked drain. Just remember to take your time, be patient, and prioritize safety throughout the process.

Outside drain rods. How to clean drain rods after use outside. Cleaning drains with rods. How do drain rods work. How to unblock outside drain with rods. How to use drainage rods. How to use drain rods youtube. Diy drain rods.