

# HOW TO Replace a Toilet

Whether you are simply remodeling or something is malfunctioning, there comes a time when you need to replace your toilet. This can seem like a daunting task. However, it doesn't need to be. Here are some simple instructions for how to replace a toilet.

First, get ready. Measure your space to ensure you select the right sized toilet to replace your old one. Gather all the materials you will need during the replacement process. You will need at least a wrench, a putty knife, towels or newspaper, an old rag, and cleaning supplies in addition to the toilet parts. Organize all of your pieces, including nuts and bolts, for quick installation and clean up. Also, have a plan for where you will put the old toilet while you install the new one. If you plan to keep it inside while you install the new toilet, grab some old towels or newspaper to put under the old toilet's pieces while you install the new one. The old toilet will likely leak excess water or transfer waxy residue; make sure you put the old toilet's pieces on an absorbent surface that you would not mind being ruined. The toilet tank and base could also break ceramic tile floors if dropped; consider using a thick towel under the pieces to protect the old toilet and the floors.



Once you are ready to begin, shut off the water supply to your toilet, and drain the tank and bowl. Flush the toilet several times to remove the majority of the water; you may need to scoop out some water using a cup or other container along with flushing. Use a rag or sponge to soak up the excess water. Once you drain the water, detach the water supply line from the toilet or supply valve. If you plan on reusing the line with your new toilet, detach it from the toilet. If you plan on replacing it, you can leave it attached to the toilet instead of the supply valve.

Now, you are ready to start disassembling your toilet. Unscrew the bolts that connect the tank to the toilet base, and carefully lift the tank away from the base. Set the tank on a towel out of the way



or move it outside. Remove the bolt covers and unscrew the bolts from the bottom of the toilet base. If you have sealant between the base and the floor, use a putty knife to loosen the seal around the base. Rock the toilet base back and forth to loosen it from the wax gasket that secures the toilet to the drain hole. Lift the toilet base, and set it aside on a disposable surface.

Clean up your space before installing the new toilet. Plug the drain hole with a rag to prevent sewer gas from escaping, but avoid allowing the rag to fall in and clog the pipe. Using your putty knife, scrape off the wax from the bottom of the old toilet and the floor around the drain hole. Then, clean the floor where the toilet was. Check the flange, which is the piece on the floor that connects the toilet to the drain pipe. A corroded or loose flange will need to be repaired or replaced, and if your bolts are rusted, they need to be replaced before installing your new toilet.



Next, start assembling your new toilet. First, install a new wax ring onto the waste horn, which is the part protruding from the bottom of the toilet that connects to the flange. If you had stored your wax ring in a cool place, allow it to warm up a little bit before installing it to make it easier to work with. Remove the rags to unplug the drain hole, and gently place the toilet over it, aligning the wax ring



with the drain hole. Be precise with your placement; if you miss, you will need a new wax ring. Gently press the bowl onto the floor to set the wax ring in the flange. Rock it back and forth gently to make it level on the floor. Put in the nuts and bolts, tightening them gently; avoid over-tightening which can harm the porcelain. Place bolt covers over the bolts for a clean, polished look. Install the rubber gasket on the bottom of the tank, following the instructions given by the manufacturer. Put the bolts through the tank



so that they protrude from the bottom, and place the tank on the bowl, aligning the bolts at the bottom of the tank with the holes in the base. Secure the nuts and washers, avoiding over-tightening them. Make sure the tank is level, and place the lid on top. Once you connect the water line to the toilet and supply valve, turn on the water supply, and flush to see how it works and if the flushing mechanism needs adjustment. To help prevent leaks, you can seal the bottom of the toilet to the floor with caulk or another sealant. Install the toilet seat, and your new toilet is assembled and ready for use. 🌿

*Erin Turner*

