

Top 10 Expert Plumbing Tips all households should know



We all take water for granted – simply turn on the tap in the sink, kitchen or shower, and water is available for us to wash, bathe, clean, drink and rinse in. But it's also important to be water-smart at home too, for the good of our environment and our water bills!

To help, here are top 10 tips compiled by our O'Brien Plumbing Experts to ensure you and your family use your home's water efficiently.

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1. **Know where your water mains is located**

Every home has a water mains tap that can be turned off in case of a flooding or a water emergency. It's important to be aware of this in case you need to shut the water off while you wait for a professional plumber.

2. **Check your water meter usage**

Just like every home has a water mains, every home also has a water meter (usually at the street entrance) which measures your water usage. The dials inside can be a good indication of whether you have a leak – if no one is using water and the numbers are increasing, there could be a problem.

3. **Be careful of what you flush**

A common way that toilets become blocked is when items that are not supposed to be flushed, such as baby wipes and tampons, are flushed. Ensure only human waste and toilet paper goes into the toilet and nothing else – preferably in small amounts.

4. **Don't close your taps too tightly**

A really simple way to prolong the life of your tap seals is to avoid closing them too tightly and damaging the parts inside.

5. **Check for any blockages**

Water drains away through pipes in our homes, and a blockage can create a serious problem. Keep an eye out for unusual smells, gurgling sounds and a build-up of water – if these occur, it's important to **contact a plumber immediately to avoid any potential leaks or bursts.**

6. **Avoid chemical drain cleaners**

While bottled chemical solutions to blocked drains seem like a good solution, their harsh ingredients can actually do more damage overall than good to the inside of your pipes.

7. **Don't ignore drips**

A leaky tap is easy to ignore when it's only a few droplets every few minutes, however, this could waste a lot of water (and money) over the space of a day or a week; especially because it tends to get worse over time. It's best to get repairs done early as soon as you notice them, so as to avoid bigger problems later.

8. **Try a water-saving showerhead**

Australia is subject to drought periods, which is why it's good practise to be conservative with our use. But if nothing else, using less water will help reduce your water bills too. Simply ask your plumber to install a water-saving showerhead in your bathroom.

9. **Select the right hot water system**

Choosing a hot water system is a very involved decision and is important to get right. Common problems with the incorrect choice can include low pressure and heat, discoloured water or even no heat at all. In fact, most people don't realise just how much the plumbing in a property can impact on the performance of their hot water system.

10. **When in doubt, call a professional plumber.**

When it comes to plumbing and water in your home, it's ALWAYS better to be careful. Should you notice any problems – don't take the risk. **Contact a professionally trained plumber** who can see to any concerns and address them in the right way.