

Checklist: Never Put These 13 Unlucky Things Down the Kitchen Drain

Blog: What Plumbers in Atlanta, Georgia Can Tell You About Garbage Disposal Repair

The garbage disposal is a very handy device. You put food down the sink, and the disposal chops it up into fine pieces. However, just because something fits down the drain doesn't mean it should go into the disposal. Unless you want to hire a plumber for a repair, keep these common items out of the garbage disposal:

- 1. Animal bones.** If you're a meat-eater, don't put your leftovers down the drain. Bones are too hard, and they may wear down or break the blades. Even if your garbage disposal manages to chop up the bones, they may still get stuck in your plumbing pipes.
- 2. Eggshells.** Even though they seem soft, keep eggshells out of the disposal. There is a sticky membrane attached to the inside of the shell. This membrane may get stuck to the sides of the disposal and cause a clog.
- 3. Pasta and rice.** Although very soft, both pasta and rice may clog your drain. Pasta may wrap around the disposal blades, and rice may swell up. Both of these are a recipe for disaster.
- 4. Coffee grounds.** When water and coffee grounds combine, they form a thick sludge. Unless you want to scoop out this sticky grime, toss your leftover coffee grounds in the trash.
- 5. Avocado pits.** All fruit pits are rock hard. If you can't cut them, neither can your garbage disposal.
- 6. Banana peels.** The stringy pieces attached to banana peels may wrap around the blade and prevent it from turning.
- 7. Celery.** Like banana peels, celery also becomes stringy when chopped up. Compost your leftover celery pieces instead.
- 8. Potato peels.** Keep potatoes and other starchy vegetables out of your garbage disposal. When you add water to potatoes peels, it creates a sticky mush that may clog your drain.
- 9. Oil and grease.** You can't mix water and grease. Instead of easily rinsing down the drain, these substances congeal and get stuck to the inside of the disposal. This may shorten the lifespan of your garbage disposal.
- 10. Silverware.** If you accidentally drop a piece of silverware down the sink, remove it before using the disposal. Turning on the motor before taking it out will damage the blade.
- 11. Cigarettes.** If it's not biodegradable, don't put it down the drain. Cigarettes are not good for you, and they're not good for your garbage disposal. Besides, cigarettes are full of chemicals you don't want in the water supply.
- 12. Medications.** Never pour unwanted medications into the garbage disposal. They will contaminate the water supply and possibly damage your plumbing system.
- 13. Paper.** It may be tempting to toss a stray piece of paper down the drain. After all, it's soft enough, right? In reality, wads of paper will dull the blades and reduce the lifespan of your disposal.