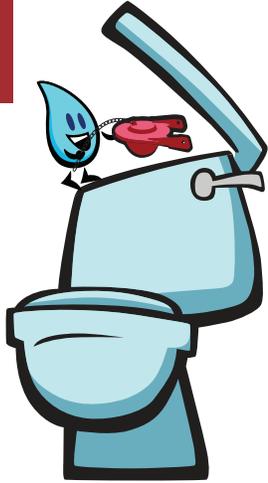
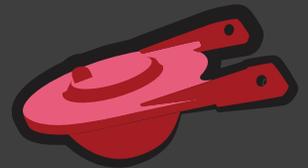


# Read This Before You **FLIP YOUR FLAPPER**



Do you know what a toilet flapper is? This simple rubber device holds water in the tank, then releases water into the bowl when the toilet is flushed. But the rubber can wear out, so the flapper should be replaced at least every five years to ensure a good seal and avoid leaks.



## Do You Have a Silent Leak?

If you're not sure that your flapper needs replacing but want to ensure your toilet is not wasting water, testing for a toilet leak is simple. Drop a few drops of food coloring or a dye tablet into the water in the toilet's tank and wait 10 minutes. If the dye shows up in the bowl, you have a leak. Don't forget to flush afterwards to remove any leftover dye and avoid staining the bowl. A new flapper or seal could fix that leak!

Watch this video to see how it's done: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFUr\\_IDERo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFUr_IDERo)

If color appears in bowl, it's a leak!

Check.



## What's in Your Tank?

Before you get started, it's important to take a look in the tank at the back of your toilet, to ensure you get the right flapper. Not all flappers are created equal! If you're not sure what size or shape flapper to get, or if your toilet even has a flapper, take a photo of the inside of the tank and bring it to your local hardware store. You can also measure the diameter of the drain pipe inside the tank—if the drain diameter measures 1 7/8" or 2 3/8" then you need a 2" flapper, but if it measures in the 3" range, you need a 3" one.



For more information about toilet components, check out the "Potty Talk" videos from WaterSense partner Moulton Niguel Water District at [www.mnwd.com/fix-a-leak/](http://www.mnwd.com/fix-a-leak/).

## Make Note of the Float

If your toilet has an elongated tank, there's a chance it has a special flapper mechanism with a foam float that attaches to the flapper chain. Before you remove the old flapper from the toilet tank, check if it has a float,

which also can wear out and needs to be replaced. Make sure you buy a flapper with a float that comes in the package if it does, or check the website of your toilet manufacturer to see if they have replacement parts or information on how to replace it.

## Check the Chain

Every new flapper should come with a chain, which hooks to the flush arm and lifts the flapper to release water into the bowl. It's important that the chain isn't too tight when attached, or it might not allow the flapper to fully drop and seal after flushing. Likewise, if the chain is too loose, it could prevent the flapper from properly sealing and covering the drain pipe hole. Test it by flushing with the tank lid off and make sure the flapper drops and seals the pipe hole completely without too much slack in the chain.



Ensure a tight seal with the right chain length.

## Not All Seals Are the Same

Some single- or dual-flush toilets have a different type of flushing mechanism, such as a tower flushing mechanism that includes a rubber seal. If the rubber seal is worn out or misaligned, then it will cause the toilet to leak. Seals are inexpensive parts that need to be replaced every few years. To confirm you have the correctly sized seal, compare the toilet brand/model number to the seal packaging. Your toilet brand can be found between the back of the toilet seat and tank. The model number may be stamped inside the tank.



Dual-flush toilet seal (Image courtesy of Lavelle Industries, Inc. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnOoWu1uLS0&t=123s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnOoWu1uLS0&t=123s))

## For More Information

Learn more about finding and fixing household leaks at [www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week).

## Need More Help?

If you need more information on how to solve your toilet problems or deciding what type of flapper you need, you have options. Visit the manufacturer website for your toilet, because they may have information on the type of flapper that can be used with your toilet model and information on how to purchase it. Two major manufacturers of flappers also have websites to help you diagnose problems and find the right flapper to fit your needs.

- Korky's Toilet Troubleshooting Guide: [www.korky.com/toilet-help/](http://www.korky.com/toilet-help/)
- Fluidmaster's Toilet Repair Guide: [www.fluidmaster.com/toilet-problems/](http://www.fluidmaster.com/toilet-problems/)

*Please note that any mention of a product or company in this document does not constitute endorsement or promotion by WaterSense or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*