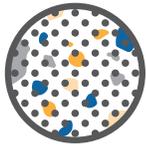


# CLEANING FAUCET AERATORS

## to help reduce lead exposure



### FAUCET AERATOR



A faucet aerator is a mesh screen attached to the tip of a faucet, or tap. It saves water, and catches debris and lead particles that may have gotten into the water.

A



B



There are 2 types of aerators:

- A** One type screws on to the outside of a faucet. You may need to use pliers, a wrench or a vice grip to loosen it.
- B** The other type screws into the inside of the faucet. You will typically need a small aerator “key” to unscrew “hidden” or “recessed” aerators.



Cleaning out the aerator is important to remove the lead particles and reduce the risk of exposure to lead from your drinking water.

Learn more about [lead in drinking water](#).

### CLEAN YOUR AERATORS REGULARLY



Inspect your aerators for debris or particles every month



Clean them out every 6 months or after construction work affecting your water service

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Rag



Plier, wrench or vice grip



Old toothbrush



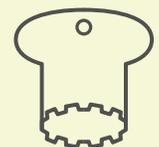
Masking tape



White vinegar



Aerator key  
(if your aerator is “hidden” or “recessed”)



**NOTE:** You may want to have extra washers/o-rings/aerators on hand to replace worn or damaged ones



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## HOW TO CLEAN FAUCET AERATORS

- 1 Place a rag in the sink to prevent any dropped pieces from falling down the drain.
- 2 Unscrew the small round piece (aerator housing) attached to the bottom of the faucet. If it's hard to remove, you can wrap the aerator housing with masking tape or a rag to protect the faucet's finish. You can use a tool (pliers, a wrench or a vice grip) to loosen it.
- 3 If your faucet has a "hidden" or "recessed" aerator, refer to the manufacturer's instructions on how to remove it. You may need an aerator key to unscrew it. Keys typically come with a new faucet. You can also buy an aerator key at a home improvement or plumbing parts supply store or online, or contact the faucet manufacturer and request a new one. Have the make and model number if possible.
- 4 Make note (or take a photo) of the order of the pieces inside the aerator before you take it apart. The pieces have to go back in exactly the same order.
- 5 Take the aerator apart.
- 6 Remove the larger pieces of debris by turning the aerator over and rinsing it with water. For grime and stubborn pieces, remove them by soaking the aerator in white vinegar for 5 minutes. Brush the aerator gently and rinse under water.
- 7 Throw any debris or grime in the garbage.
- 8 Put the pieces of the aerator back together in their original order and screw it back onto the faucet.
- 9 Repeat these steps for all faucets.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

You can find a number of resources on how to clean and disassemble different types of aerators available on the Internet. Your faucet manufacturer may also have videos on how to clean their specific type of aerator.

- [The big benefits of cleaning and updating faucet aerators](#) (in English only)
- [How to clean your aerator](#) (in English only)
- [Change your clock, check your smoke detectors... and clean your aerators](#) (in English only)