

The Care and Feeding of Your Garbage Disposal

The powerful roar of your disposal's motor may convince you it can take on any garbage you throw its way, but it's important to remember that your disposal is not a trash can. Garbage disposals are designed to grind small bits of biodegradable food waste to help prevent clogged drains. Proper use and maintenance will not only extend the life of your appliance, but will also spare you unnecessary and costly service calls.

Do:

- Small amounts of skinless, boneless, pit-less and non-fibrous foods are safe to grind.

Don't:

- Shells, skins, husks, rinds and other hard or fibrous materials should not be put in the disposal (e.g., clam shells, oyster shells, corn husks, fruit pits, banana peels, avocado skins and bones).
- Large amounts of starchy foods (e.g., noodles and rice) should not be put in the disposal. Although they are easily ground, they expand in water and can clog drains.

Always:

- Run *cold* water when operating the disposal. Keep the water running for at least 30 seconds after you turn off the unit.

Never:

- Use *hot* water when operating the disposal.
- Put non-food materials through the disposal. This includes all types of glass, plastic and metals (e.g., bottle caps, aluminum foil and plastic wrap).
- Put harsh chemicals in the disposal or down the drain.

Sometimes:

- Occasionally grinding bits of citrus peel helps clean and freshen the disposal.
- Grinding a little ice once a month helps scrape away deposits and remove odors.
- Running small amounts of egg shells or coffee grounds through the disposal is sometimes suggested to sharpen the blades; however some sources warn against the practice. Consult your user's manual for recommendations specific to your model.

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Source: CAI