

# Do you need a plumber for that?

## ✘ *Four ways to clear obstacles from drains*

A morning shower can quickly become unpleasant when the water refuses to drain away. The most likely suspect is a mass of solid hair, shampoo and soap blocking the drain and pipes.

The keratin in human hair quickly hardens in dark conditions and is virtually impossible to remove with a plunger alone. Luckily there are a few home solutions to help you dissolve stubborn hair and get water flowing freely again without calling in the plumbers.

### **Baking Soda and Vinegar**

When baking soda and vinegar are mixed together, a chemical reaction takes place which works wonders to dissolve matted hair.

Pour one cup of baking soda into the clogged drain followed by one cup of vinegar. Make sure you cover the drain with a rag or cloth immediately after pouring in the vinegar – You don't want the mixture to escape as it reacts and expands. To finish the job, pour boiling water down the drain after 30 minutes to flush everything away.

### **Biological Cleaners**

Most supermarkets stock drain cleaners with biological enzymes. These natural enzymes eat away at the stubborn keratin in hair. Make sure you read the label on the bottle before use, follow these instructions by pouring the amount specified down the blocked drain, quickly followed by water.

### **Caustic Cleaners**

Stronger drain cleaners are made up of alkaline caustics, such as potassium hydroxide, sodium and pure lye. Both caustic gels and powders quickly dissolve hair, but can be extremely toxic. Invest in some thick rubber gloves and eye protection before following the instructions on the bottle carefully.

### **Acid-Based Cleaners**

If the trapped hair is refusing to budge, acid-based drain cleaners can be used as a last resort. They contain corrosive and toxic materials, such as sulfuric acid, which cuts through hair but can also react dangerously with any other chemical residues left in your drain.

These strong cleaners can normally be found at DIY shops, where they will also be able to provide you with specialist rubber gloves, goggles and a face mask to protect against the acid. Again, make sure you follow the instructions on the bottle step by step.

If a hair blockage still refuses to budge after trying all of these home solutions, or your drain becomes blocked again within a short period, it may be time to call in a Dyno emergency plumber.