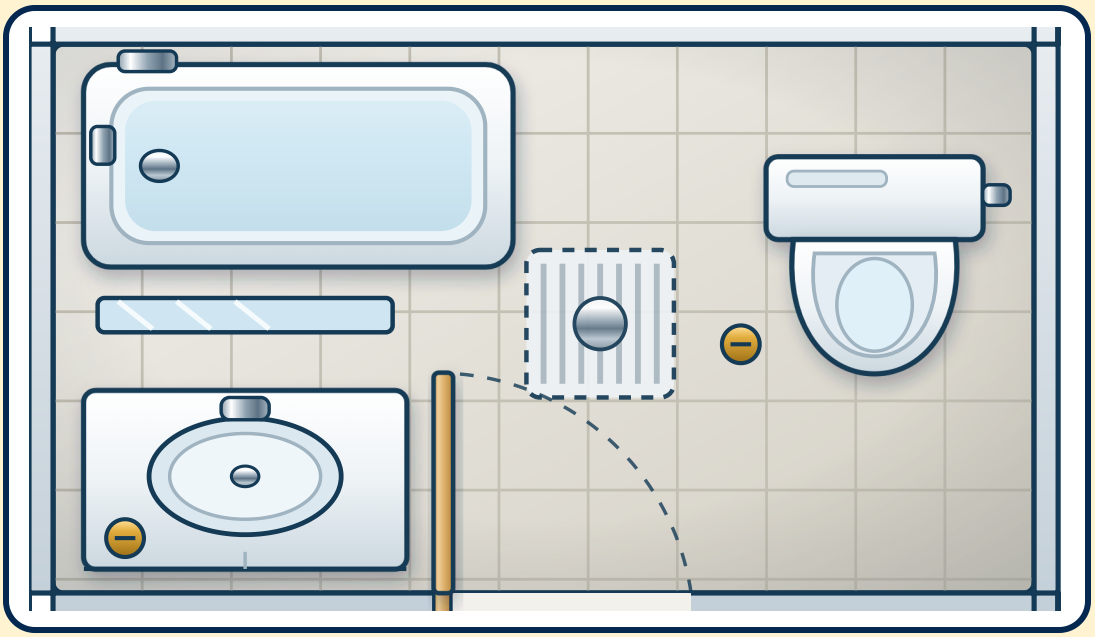
COLIN CAN HELP

# DIY or Call a Guy

## Bathroom Edition

Every common bathroom problem and upgrade, drawn so you can see what is involved, rated so you know whether to pick up a wrench, and priced so you know what the call costs if you do not.



VERDICT 1
**DIY**

VERDICT 2
**DIY, WITH CARE**

VERDICT 3
**CALL A GUY**

**Colin Ross**

COLIN CAN HELP LLC · CLEVELAND, OHIO

# How to read these pages

Every problem and project page uses the same four numbers and one of three verdicts. Here is what they mean.

## DIY

A careful first-timer can do this with basic tools. If it goes wrong, the damage is small and easy to undo.

## DIY, WITH CARE

Doable, but one step can cause a leak or break something if you rush. Read the whole page first, and stop at the red box.

## CALL A GUY

Check it yourself, then hire it out. The page shows what to look for and what to tell the pro. That is a good result, not a failed one.

### TIME

Hands-on working time, first time through. Waiting for things to soak, dry or cure is extra and is shown in the step tags, such as "30 MIN WAIT". On a page that only diagnoses a problem, this box reads **Check time**.

### PARTS

What you spend at the store for this one job: materials, plus any job-specific tool you would have to buy, such as a toilet auger. General tools are not counted; they are listed under "You need".

### SKILL

How demanding the job is, 1 to 5; the scale is below. On a diagnosis page, the number is for the repair the page leads to.

### A PRO COSTS

A planning range for hiring the job out, from published national cost guides. Low end: an economical qualified independent service. High end: an established, higher-priced company. Both include labor, ordinary parts and a typical minimum call charge. New fixtures, after-hours rates, wall or floor repairs and permits are not.

### SKILL, FROM 1 TO 5

| | |
|---|---|
| **1 of 5** | One simple tool, or none. Little to undo if it goes wrong. |
| **2 of 5** | Basic hand tools. Water gets shut off at the fixture. |
| **3 of 5** | Several steps, and parts that have to match. Mistakes here usually show up as a drip you then chase. |
| **4 of 5** | Heavy, awkward or two-person work, or two trades in one job |
| **5 of 5** | Opens walls or floors, or needs a license or permit. Hire it. |

### ABOUT THE NUMBERS

- Pro costs are national planning ranges from published 2026 cost guides: not quotes, and not the author's own rates
- No one can price every market. Your town, your house and what is found once work starts all move the number
- Times assume parts in hand and nothing seized
- Always get two or three written local quotes before you budget

### THE RED BOX

- ✕ It lists the conditions that end the DIY attempt
- ✕ Stopping there is the right call, not giving up
- ✕ "Not covered here" means a different procedure, not a danger
- ✕ When in doubt, shut the water or breaker off and ask

*"Read the whole page before you pick up a tool. The warning at the bottom still counts."*

# Water where it should not be

Shut the nearest valve first, then find it on this list. If it is spreading faster than you can catch it, page 16.

## AROUND THE TOILET


- Water on the floor at the base ..... 40
- It rocks when you sit down ..... 39
- Drips between the tank and the bowl ..... 41
- A puddle that only appears after a flush ..... 40
- Wet behind the toilet, down by the valve ..... 41
- The outside of the tank is wet all over ..... 42


## UNDER OR AROUND THE SINK


- Something is wet in the cabinet ..... 50
- It drips all the time, running or not ..... 51
- A ring of water around the drain flange ..... 52
- Water appears only after a big fill ..... 45
- It only drips while the tap is running ..... 52
- Wet where the faucet meets the counter ..... 49
- The cabinet floor is stained or soft ..... 69
- Green or white crust on a fitting ..... 51


## THE TUB AND SHOWER


- Water on the floor outside the shower ..... 61
- The curtain is not keeping water in ..... 98
- The showerhead drips long after you stop ..... 56
- Water seeps out at the tub rim ..... 65
- The shower door leaks along the bottom ..... 63
- A drip from the tub drain or overflow ..... 62
- The spout runs while the shower is on ..... 57
- A crack in the tub or shower floor ..... 64


## WATER WITH NO OBVIOUS SOURCE


- A stain on the ceiling below ..... 69
- Paint bubbling on a bathroom wall ..... 70
- The water bill jumped and nothing looks wrong ..... 31
- The wall beside the shower is damp ..... 68
- Write down what it does and when ..... 131
- You need every valve in the house ..... 127

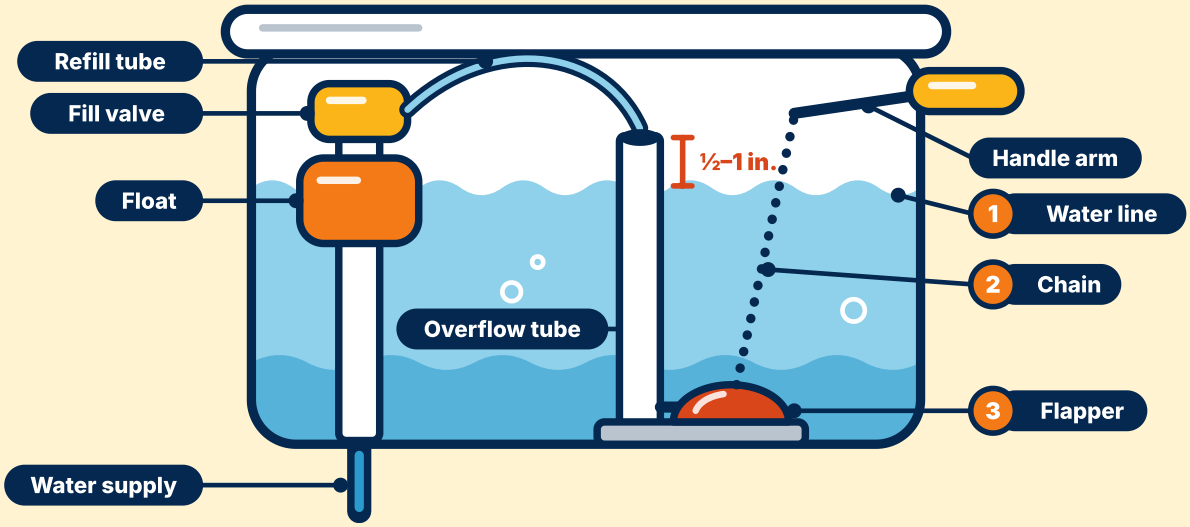



*"Pressure leaks run all the time. Gravity leaks only run when something drains. That alone narrows it by half."*

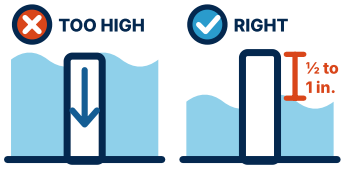
# The toilet keeps running

You hear hissing, trickling, or the tank refilling when nobody has flushed.

| THE VERDICT | TIME | PARTS | SKILL | A PRO COSTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DIY | 10–30 min | $0–$25 | 1 of 5 | $125–$400 |



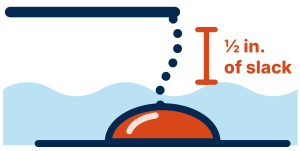

## 1 Water over the tube?




The float is set too high. Turn the screw or slide the clip on the fill valve to **lower the float** until water stops at the tank's fill mark, or ½ to 1 inch below the top of the tube.

FREE · 5 MIN

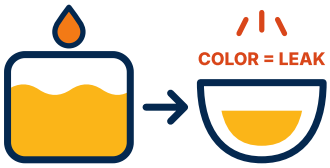
## 2 Chain wrong length?




Tight holds the flapper open. Long gets trapped under it. **Move the clip** so the chain has about ½ inch of slack with the flapper closed.

FREE · 2 MIN

## 3 Refills by itself?




Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Don't flush for 20 minutes. Color in the bowl means the flush seal leaks, usually the flapper. **Replace it**: page 32.

$5–$15 · 15 MIN

### YOU NEED

- Food coloring
- Sponge and a towel
- New flapper, if the dye test fails

### STOP AND CALL A GUY IF

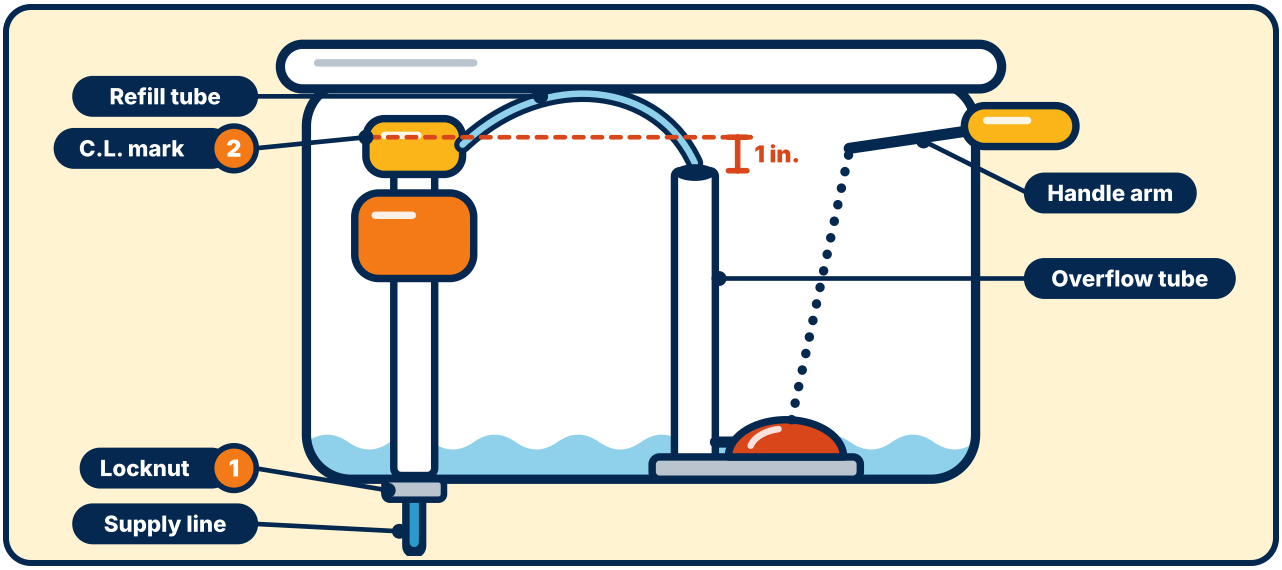
- ✕ The shutoff valve won't turn, or drips when you turn it
- ✕ You see a crack in the tank or water on the floor
- ✕ It still runs after a new flapper and a float adjustment

*"Start with a look, not a shopping trip."*

# Replace the fill valve

The hissing won't quit, the float won't adjust, or the tank takes forever to fill.

| THE VERDICT | TIME | PARTS | SKILL | A PRO COSTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DIY, WITH CARE | 30–45 min | $10–$25 | 2 of 5 | $125–$350 |



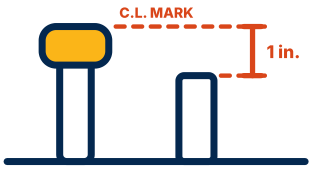

## 1 Drain and disconnect



Water off. Flush, then sponge out the last inch. Put a towel under the tank and unscrew the **supply line**, then the **locknut**.

10 MIN

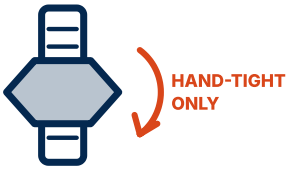
## 2 Set the height




Lift out the old valve. Twist the new one taller or shorter until the **C.L. mark** on its body sits at least 1 inch above the top of the overflow tube. Check the lid still fits.

5 MIN

## 3 Hand-tight, then test




Tighten the locknut and supply nut **by hand only**. Clip the refill tube above the overflow tube, never down inside it. Water on slowly. Set the level ½ inch below the top of the tube.

15 MIN

### YOU NEED

- Universal fill valve kit
- Sponge, towel and a small bucket
- Adjustable pliers, for the old nut only

### STOP AND CALL A GUY IF

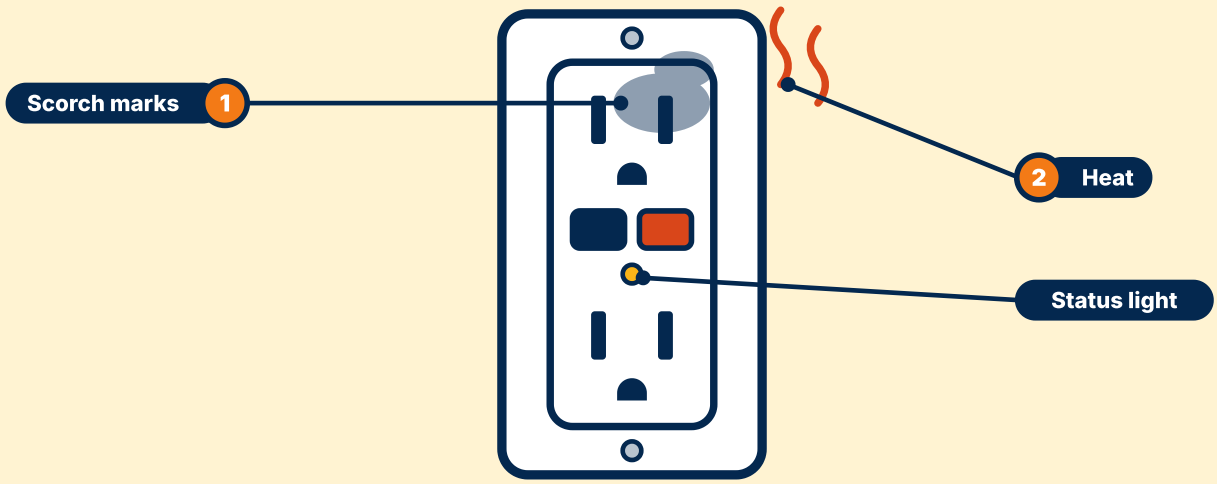
- ✕ The shutoff valve won't close all the way
- ✕ The old locknut is corroded and will not budge
- ✕ You find a crack anywhere on the tank

*"Hand-tight means hand-tight. Porcelain doesn't forgive enthusiasm."*

# Heat, buzzing or a burning smell

A warm switch plate, a crackle, a fishy or hot-plastic smell. This one is not a project.

| THE VERDICT | TIME | PARTS | SKILL | A PRO COSTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CALL A GUY | Right now | $0 | None | $150–$450 |




## 1 Stop using it



HANDS OFF

Hands off the outlet, switch or fixture. Unplug the device only if you can do it **dry and safely**.

NOW

## 2 Breaker off



OFF, AND LEAVE IT OFF

Turn off the breaker for that circuit and **leave it off**. Tape a note on it so nobody flips it back.

NOW

## 3 Smoke or flame?



GET OUT, THEN CALL 911

Get everyone out and **call 911**. Never put water on an electrical fire.

EMERGENCY

### YOU NEED

- Flashlight
- To know where your breaker panel is

### CALL AN ELECTRICIAN TODAY IF

- ✕ A switch or outlet is warm, buzzes or crackles
- ✕ You see scorch marks or melted plastic
- ✕ Lights dim when the fan or hair dryer runs
- ✕ There is a hot-plastic or fishy smell

*"Water and electricity share this room. Nobody gets points for bravery here."*

FREE SAMPLE · DIY OR CALL A GUY: BATHROOM EDITION

# That was 3 problem pages. The book has 100+.

You just read the symptom finder for leaks and one page of each verdict: DIY, DIY with care, and Call a guy. The full paperback has:

- **The full symptom finder**
  Find any bathroom problem by what it is doing (pages 10–13).
- **Every repair page**
  Toilets, sinks and faucets, tubs and showers, caulk and grout, fans and hardware.
- **Upgrade projects**
  New toilet, faucet, vanity, fan, lighting, paint, grab bars and more.
- **Keep it working**
  Daily, weekly, monthly and yearly checks so small problems stay small.
- **The workbook**
  Shutoffs, parts history and an emergency card you fill in for your house.
- **Glossary and sources**
  Plain-English terms and where every price range came from.

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**Near Cleveland and the verdict says Call a guy?**

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