

My toilet's running...

If your toilet is running, you may be losing a lot of money and, even worse, wasting plenty of water. Here are some things to try if your toilet will not stop running:

Start by jiggling the toilet handle. If the running stops, you need to either adjust the lift chain attachment or the handle.



If that does not work, remove the tank cover and check to see if the float ball is touching the side of the tank. If it is, bend the arm to reposition the float ball away from the edge of the tank.

Lift the float rod above the water level. If the water stops running, gently bend the rod down until the float is at rest when the water level is about one half inch below the top of the overflow pipe.

Check to see if your float ball is leaking. If more than half of the float is underwater, it may have a leak. Turn off the shutoff valve below the tank and flush the toilet to empty it. Unscrew the float and shake it. If you hear water inside, replace the float ball.

Sometimes the flapper valve becomes worn or distorted and does not seal the tank. This problem is easy to fix. Just empty the tank, remove the flapper and replace it with a new one.

If the flapper valve seat is pitted or cracked, the whole unit can be replaced. Kits are available for this purpose, but they usually require that the tank be removed from the bowl. For this repair, follow the directions included with the flapper valve/seat replacement kit.

If the toilet still runs, empty the tank again and remove the screws that hold the float rod and its attached linkage to the intake valve. Pull the intake valve plunger up and out of the plunger seat.

You may need to pry it gently with a screwdriver to get it started. Replace the washer at the base of the plunger and the washer or packing that fits in the groove on the plunger body. As an alternative, entire ballcock assemblies are available in economical replacement kits. They come completely assembled and only need to be installed in the tank. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

