

8 Things You Should NEVER Put Down Your Garbage Disposal

Unless you want major plumbing problems.

by RHEANNA O'NEIL BELLOMO MAY 2, 2016

If you're lucky enough to have a garbage disposal that will mash up food waste with the flick of a switch, then you need to know how to take care of it. (They can be really expensive!) While plenty of foods are totally okay to dump down the drain—citrus rinds, meat scraps—there are eight items you should never, ever try to get rid of via the kitchen sink.

1 Bones

They'll just keep spinning around and around with the blades. And if you're lucky enough to get them down, they definitely won't make it down the drain pipes.

2 Celery

The fibrous strings tend to tangle around your disposal's blades. This same rule applies to asparagus and corn husks.

3 Coffee grounds

Coffee grounds are deceptive. They appear to go down easy, but really they're going to pile up and cause a sludgy, sediment-like mess in your drain.

4 Egg shells

There's a bit of argument on this one. Some people say they're totally safe for the disposal and actually help to sharpen your disposal's blades; while others believe the shells' membrane lining can stick to the sides of the disposal and wrap around the shredder, wreaking lots of havoc.

5 Fruit pits/seeds

Have you ever tried to cut through a peach pit or avocado seed? Yeah, that's just not gonna happen.

6 Grease

Grease and oil might not even make it into the disposal and will likely clog up your pipes instead. That's just not pretty.

7 Pasta or Rice

Spaghetti, ziti, linguine, fusilli—whatever you like you sauce up always expands when exposed to water, even after you've fully cooked it. So whether you have a garbage disposal or not, you shouldn't dump it down the drain, where it'll swell and either fill the disposal trap or cause even bigger problems. Ditto for rice.

8 Potato or onion peels

These suckers can cause a soupy mess in your disposal down the road—even if you think you can get away with dumping them down the drain from time to time. The same goes for other starchy vegetables and beans.