

## What You Should and Shouldn't Put In Your Garbage Disposal Unit.

There are limits to what a garbage disposal system can handle; it's not equipped to process everything you might want to put in it. The following is a list of things you should never put into your disposal unit.

### Garbage Disposal Unit No-Nos

**NON-FOOD ITEMS** –When plates and utensils pile up, a fork or two can easily slip into your garbage disposal unit. Before you grind up anything, always clear out all the dishes in the sink, and check to make sure no non-food items have fallen inside.

**GREASE** – The problem with grease is that, when it cools down, it solidifies inside your drain and creates clogs. For that reason, you should avoid putting oil and fats in your disposal unit as well.

**FIBROUS FOODS** – Celery, asparagus, artichokes, chard, kale, lettuce, potato peelings, and onion skins should all be kept out of your garbage disposal unit. These items can easily entangle the blades causing it to jam.

**PASTA AND RICE** – When uncooked pasta and rice are exposed to water, they expand. You can imagine what will happen if you dump a sizeable amount into your garbage disposal unit—you'll have a backed up drain in no time.

**COFFEE GROUNDS** – Coffee grounds are another disposer hazard because they tend to get caught in the drain trap.

**FRUIT PITS, SEEDS AND APPLE CORES** – These items are far too solid for your garbage disposal unit to process. You will do better to toss them in the trash or use them to contribute to your compost heap.

**EGGSHELLS** – The membrane on the inside of an eggshell can wrap around your garbage disposal unit's blades, so do not put eggshells into the appliance.

**BONES** – Fish bones are the exception but bones challenge even industrial strength disposal units. These are better to be collected with the trash.

### Appropriate for Your Garbage Disposal Unit.

Now that you have a list of what not to put in a garbage disposer, let's talk about the things your disposer is designed to handle.

**COLD WATER** – For it to function at its best, you should always run cold water through your garbage disposal unit for 20-30 seconds before and after you grind food stuffs. This ensures that all of the food will be flushed down the drain. You don't want a few decaying scraps sitting at the bottom of your disposal unit, stinking up your sink.

**LIQUIDS AND SOFT FOODS** – Here's a good rule of thumb: if a baby can eat it, the garbage disposer can handle it without any problems

CHOPPED FOODS – When you want to process solid foods, chop them up thoroughly before feeding it to your disposal unit.

DISH SOAP – No, you wouldn't use your garbage disposal unit to dispose of dish soap, but putting soap inside will help you clean the disposal unit. Once you pour a little in, turn on your unit and run cold water through it. Your disposal unit will thank you.

ICE CUBES – Throwing a few of these in occasionally will knock off food residue that has built up on the unit's blades. To make them even more effective, use ice cubes made out of lemon juice, vinegar, or some other biodegradable cleanser. These will freshen up the unit. Just be sure to label your ice trays so that you don't accidentally use them for ice intended to go into foods or drinks.