

Learn how to maintain your water filter

Water filters certified to remove lead (NSF/ANSI Standard 53*) are very effective at protecting you and your loved ones from lead. However, they must be installed, maintained, and used properly to work!

To make sure your water filter is working right:



Follow the instructions that came with your filter.

Each filter type, brand, and model can be a little different.

- Always read the manufacturer's instructions that came with your filter carefully and follow the installation and maintenance instructions exactly!
- If you have questions or problems with your filter, contact the manufacturer.



Change the filter cartridge on time

Filters have cartridges that wear out and become less effective with use.

- Always be sure to use the cartridge that's compatible with your filter and follow the manufacturer's instructions to change it.
- Know when it's time to replace your filter. Some filters have indicator lights that alert you. When there is no indicator light, you'll need to track the days (or gallons used) after installing a new cartridge and set your own reminder to change your cartridge.

For even more protection, take these steps to reduce your exposure to lead in water:

Clean your aerator regularly

Remove the screen at the end of your faucet, called an aerator, from your drinking water faucet and rinse it out. This will remove particles caught in the aerator, some of those particles could contain lead.

Depending on your faucet, you might need tools like pliers. Some aerators cannot be removed.



Get your water moving

The more time water sits in your home's pipes, the more lead it may contain. If water has been sitting in pipes, let water run separate from the filter (not through the filter) to improve water quality and to maintain your filter. To avoid wasting water, you can use household activities to flush your pipes such as running the tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or doing a load of dishes.

* To increase your level of confidence, look for filters that are also certified by NSF/ANSI Standard 42, which means the filter reduces very small particles (that might contain lead) from the water.

There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. For more information visit: [epa.gov/safewater](https://www.epa.gov/safewater)

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If you are interested in using filters to reduce lead exposure, use and maintain your filter with these tips.

Do



Use your filter for cooking, drinking, or making baby formula

Use your filter anytime you consume water. Some examples are filling a pot for cooking rice or pasta, making ice to use in drinks, and preparing a beverage from powder or concentrate.



Use cold water

Run your faucet until the water is cold before turning on your filter or putting it in your pitcher. Cold water won't damage your filter.



Don't use filters for showering or chores

You don't need to use a filter for activities when water isn't going into your body, like washing or household chores. Flowing large amounts of water you won't be consuming through your filter will wear it out faster.



Never use hot water

Never run hot water through your faucet filter or put it in your pitcher filter because it can damage your filter. If you need to heat water, filter it first and then heat.



Don't improperly fill pitcher filters

Don't overfill your pitcher and don't tip to pour before the water has filtered through. If pitchers aren't filled properly, unfiltered water can bypass the filter and go straight into your drinking glass.



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