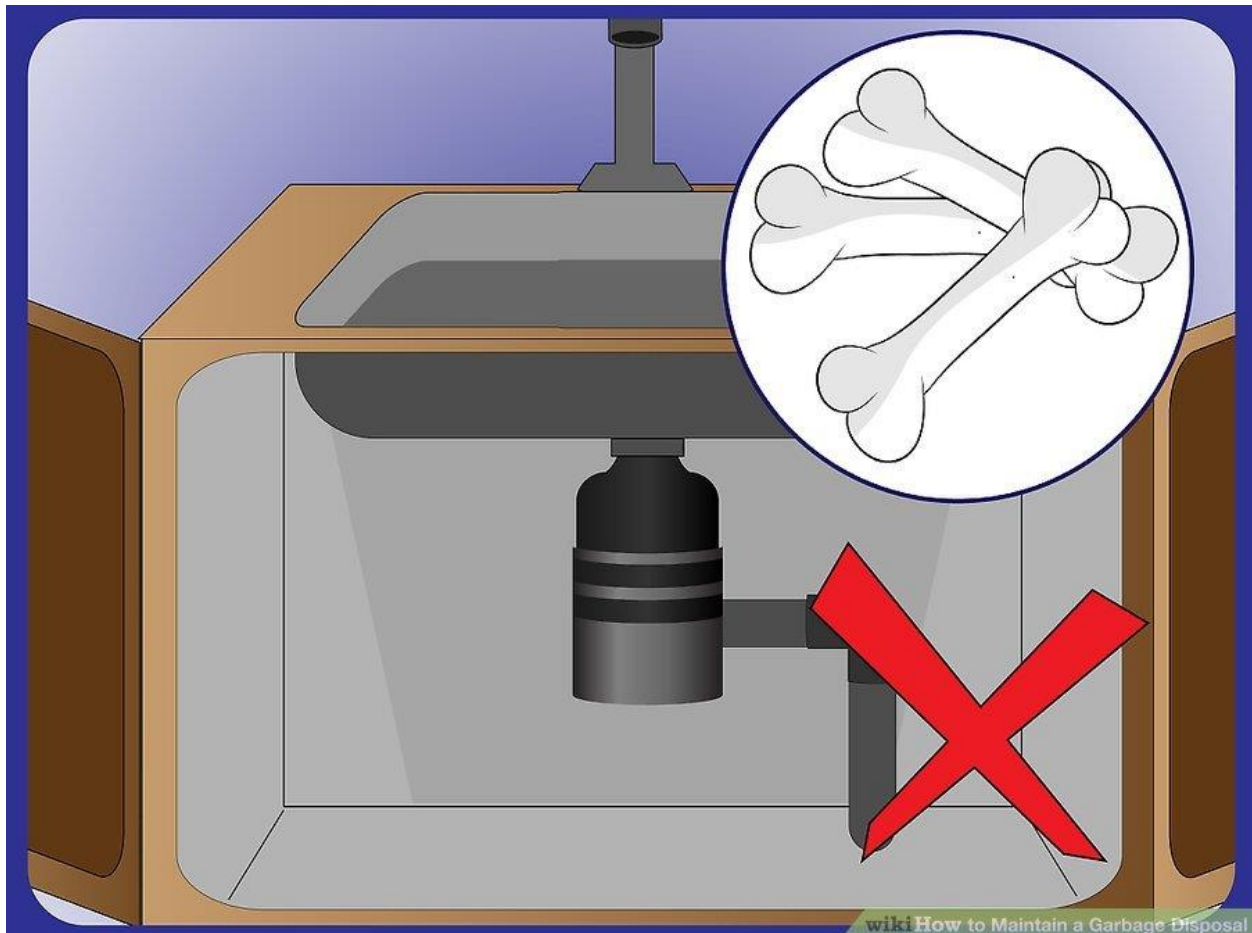


How to Maintain a Garbage Disposal

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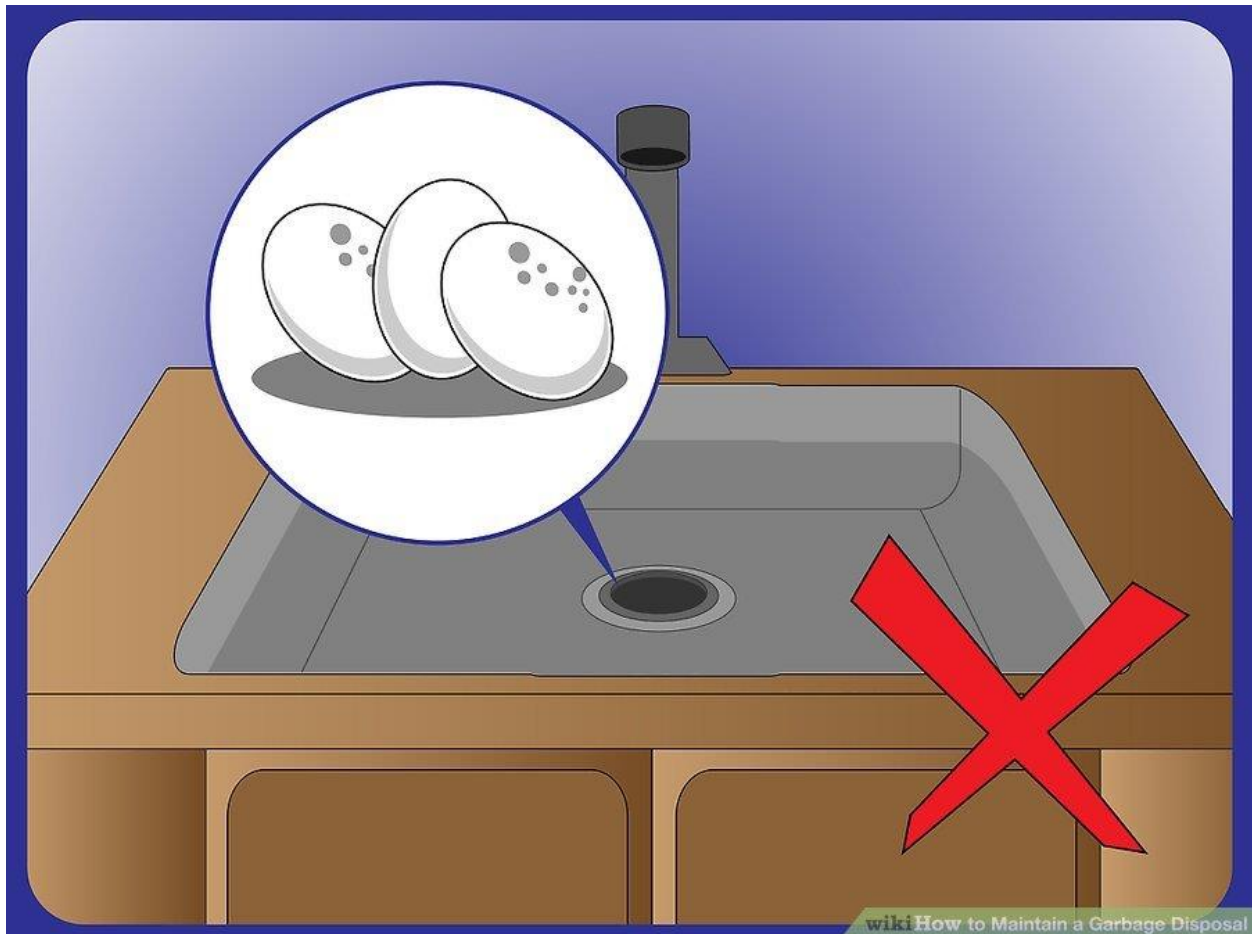
A garbage disposal, also known as waste disposal unit or garburator, is a device underneath a sink that shreds food waste so that it can pass through plumbing. A garbage disposal is a great way to keep the smells of old garbage out of your garbage cans and kitchen.



1. Keep anything too hard out of the disposal. The shredder will dull and become less efficient. Small hard objects can

also get stuck and jam the rotating parts. Each garbage disposal has its own capacity for hard objects. The more expensive models of the same brand tend to have higher hardness capacities. The instruction manual usually specifies a list of objects to avoid. You can also gain experience with your own garbage disposal. Strong vegetable fibres can jam some garbage disposals, as well. If something may be harder than what the disposal handles, just put it in your trash can or think about setting up a worm composting bin. Some items to avoid are:

- hard shells from shrimp, crabs and other shellfish
- unpopped popcorn kernels
- hard bones



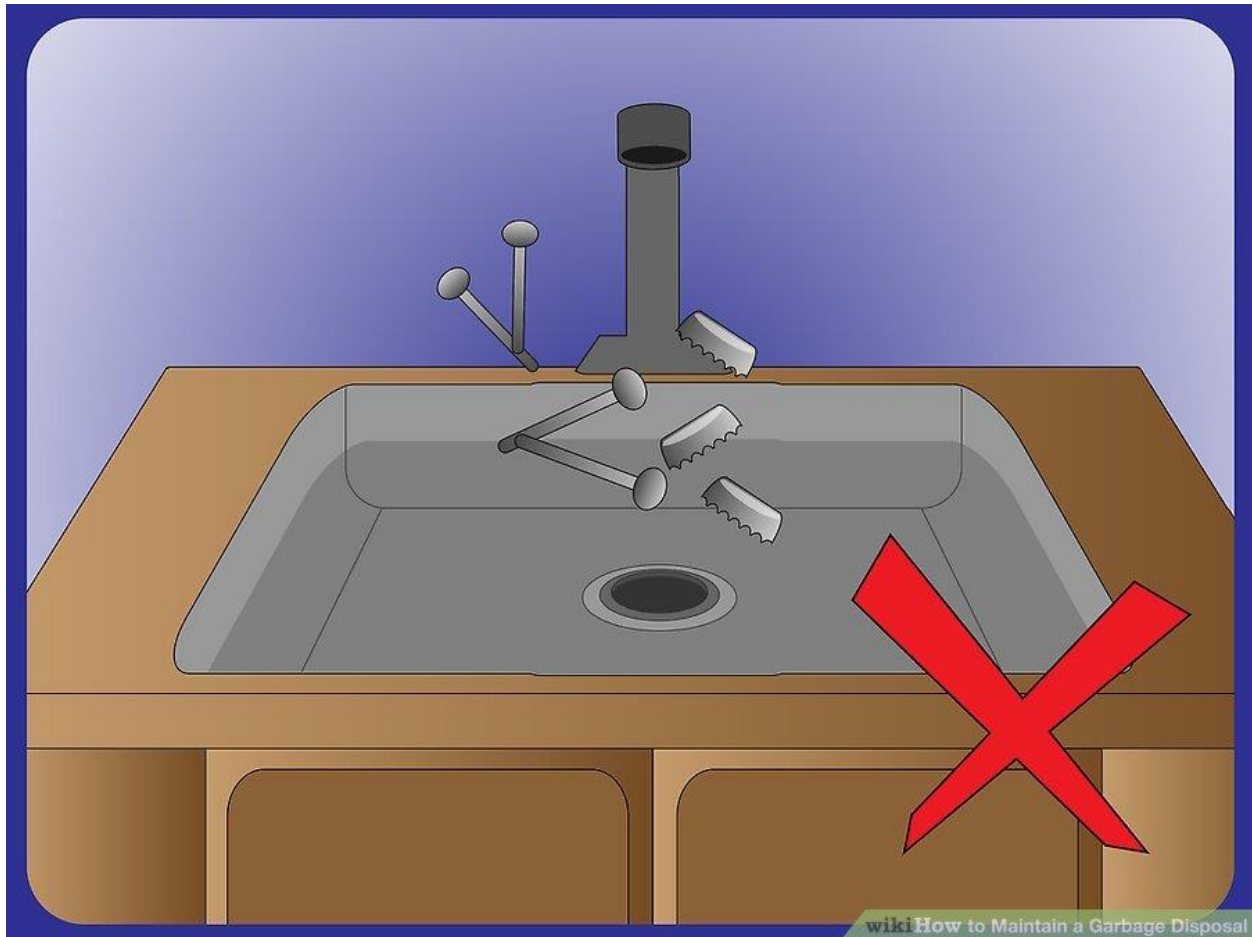
2. Do not put fibrous or starchy items in the disposal. Both can cause particularly stubborn drain blockages (fibers get tangled, and starches get thick). The following items should be put in the disposal in minimal increments, preferably cut into small pieces, or not at all:

- banana peels
- celery
- potato peelings
- corn husk or corn cobs
- artichokes
- coffee grounds (in quantity) or coffee filters
- fruit pits and hard seeds from things like avocados or peaches

- onion skins (unless you're especially careful to completely remove the thin membranes of each, which can wrap around the shredder ring)
- egg shells should not be put in the disposal as they turn into a sand-like substance that clogs piping.

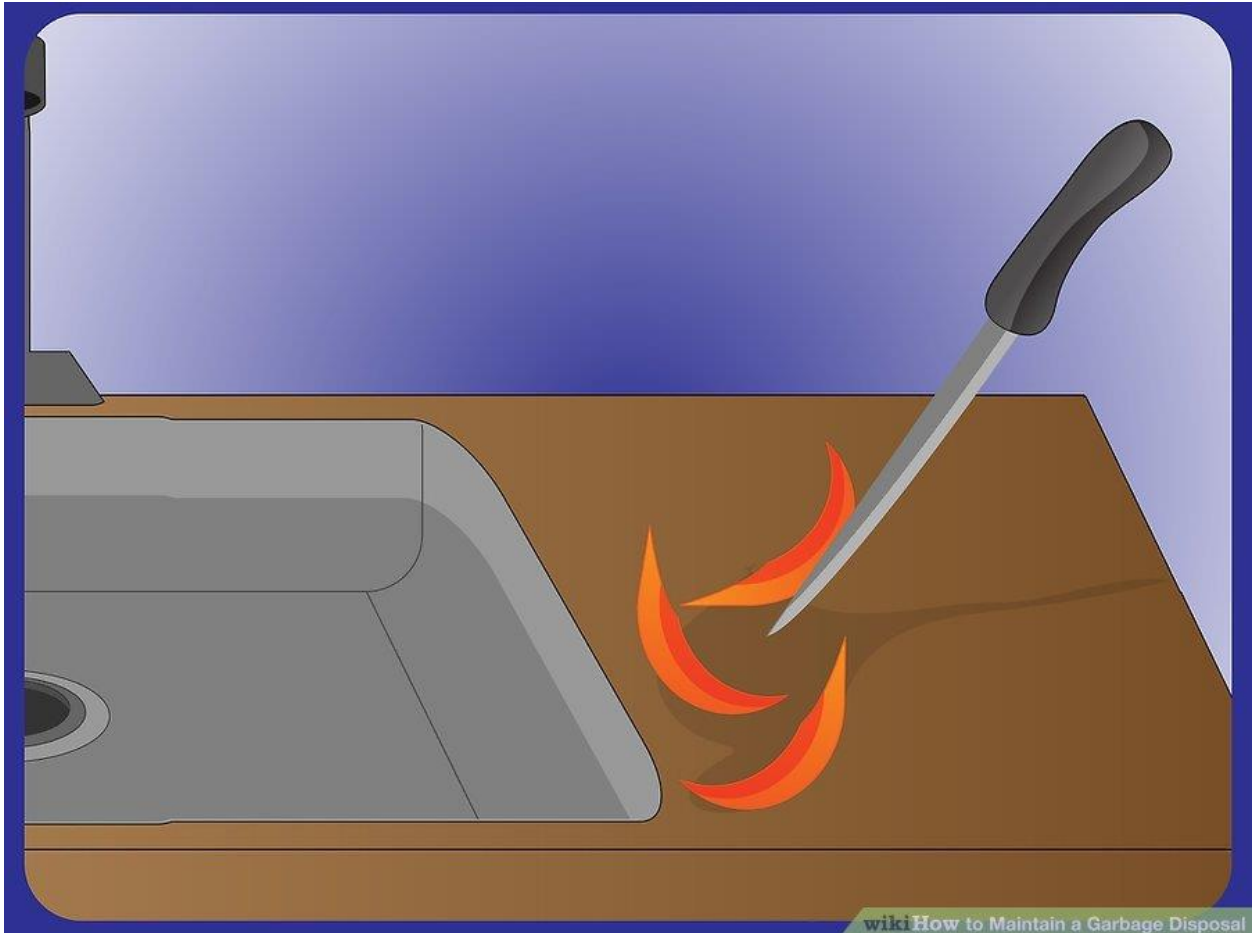


3. All the above are easily composted

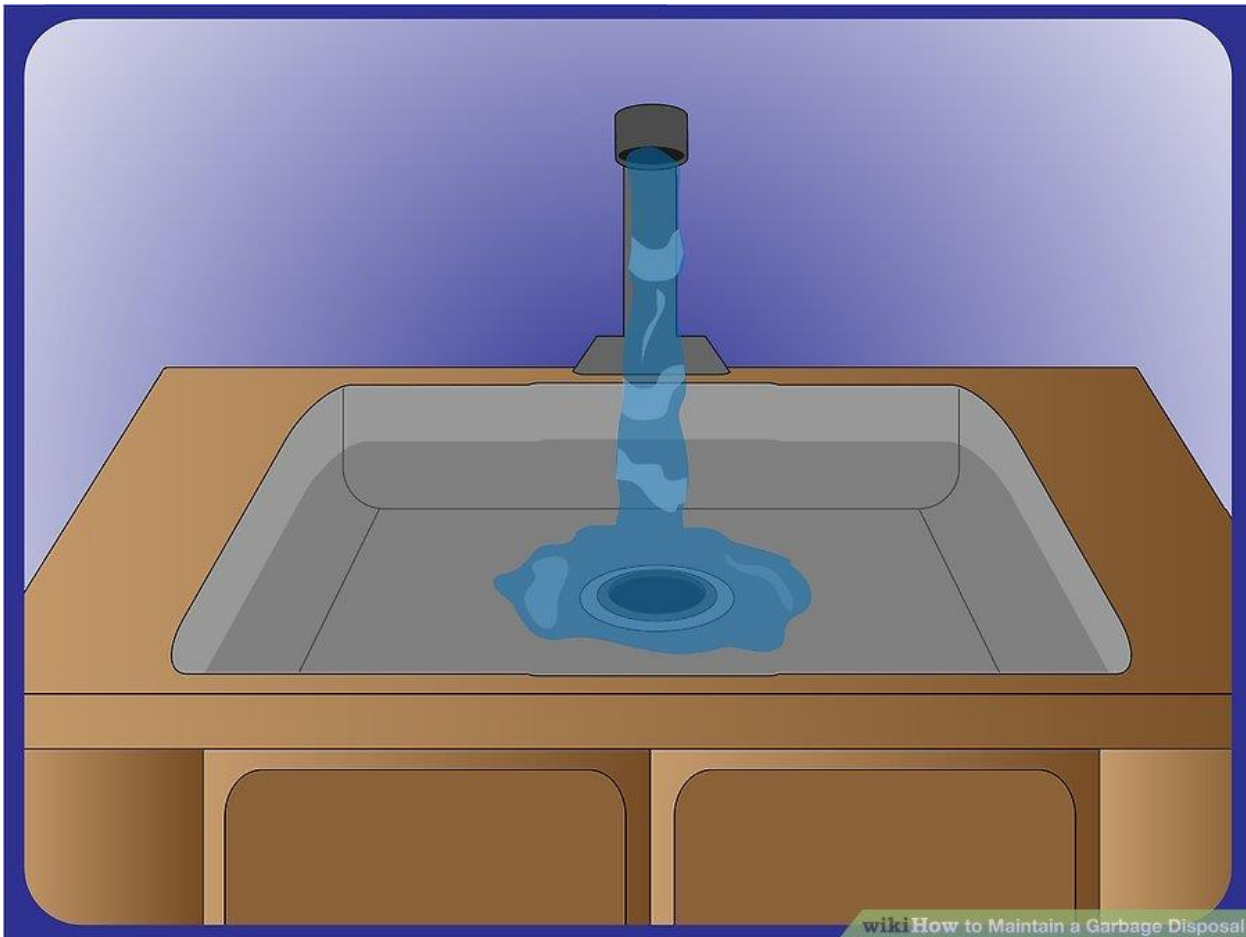


4. Avoid placing trash or hard items down the disposal. Common sense will go a long way, but here are some examples of items to avoid:

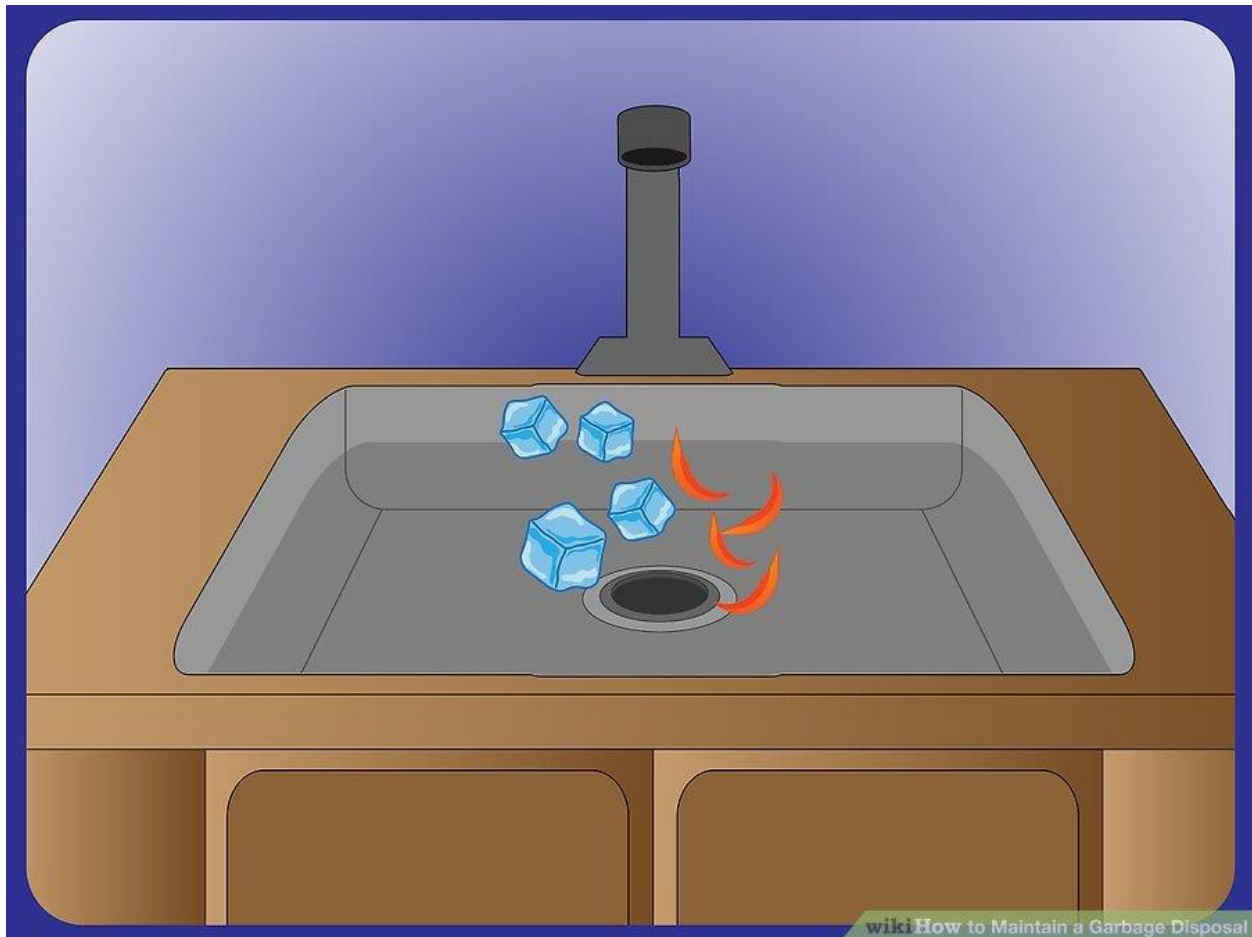
- twist ties, pull tabs, rubber bands
- glass, screws, nails,
- utensils
- cigarette butts or bottle caps, paper, plastic, or other trash
- fabric, string, rags, or sponges
- plant or flower clippings
- children's toys
- hair
- grease



- 5. Cut large items into smaller pieces.** If they are too large, like the skins of melons, cut them into smaller pieces and put them one at a time into the disposal instead of trying to shove a large amount in at once.
- If you find yourself with a lot of larger pieces to cut up, it may be best to place them in the compost or trash instead.



- 6. Run cold water while the disposal is on.** Keep disposer and water running for 30 to 60 seconds AFTER the waste matter has cleared *your* drain. The waste still has a distance to go. Cold water keeps the motor, bearings and shredder assembly from overheating. It also lets the waste go down easier because the water is pushing it down. Don't use hot water, because it can melt fat and allow it to re-solidify as a blockage further down in the drain.



7. Clean it regularly.

- With the disposal off, clean the inner side of the rubber in the center of the sink leading to the disposal. It gets very dirty, and gives off an odor when not cleaned. Just wipe it with a paper towel.
- Throw some ice down once in a while. While ice will not sharpen the shredders (as is commonly believed) it *does* knock off any debris buildup on the sharp edges that keeps them from grinding food properly. For better results, make special ice cubes from pure lemon juice or vinegar, or alternate with biodegradable cleanser (label them in your freezer!) Cover and seal ice trays used in your freezer for cleanser, and do not reuse trays for food

- or drink after having been used for cleanser. While using the disposal, be sure to run cold water at the same time.
- Dispose orange peels, or any citrus rinds, to freshen the disposal and keep it smelling clean, but cut them into slices first as large pieces of citrus peel, e.g. half a lime, can jam a disposal. You can also use pieces of citrus fruit that may be too old to consume, as long as they're not too spoiled to smell nice. You can freeze these pieces first, if you wish.