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How to descale your shower head

Anything that comes into regular contact with hard water will inevitably lead to limescale. And as limescale builds up, showerheads get blocked, affecting the water flow and taking the shine off your shower.

Not all showerheads are removable, meaning that descaling a fixed shower head can seem a bit trickier than an adjustable one. However, as with any problem that involves limescale, your first port of call should always be vinegar.

White Vinegar

If you search the internet on how to descale household items, nearly every site will mention the use of vinegar. Malt vinegar isn't particularly effective and brown vinegar may stain, so white distilled vinegar is the best to use.

For handheld shower heads:

- Remove the showerhead from the hose. Be careful not to lose the rubber washer when you do as this stops water from leaking between the head and the hose.
- Put the shower head in a bucket or plastic container and cover it with white vinegar.
- Leave the shower head to soak in the vinegar for at least 30 minutes, preferably around an hour. If your shower head is brass, do not leave it in the vinegar for any longer than 30 minutes.
- Take the shower head out of the vinegar and rinse it with water.
- Remove any remaining limescale with an old toothbrush, particular from the nozzle.
- Rinse again with water and wipe with a soft cloth.
- Reattach to the hose and turn on the shower to flush out any remaining limescale.

For fixed shower heads:

- Take a plastic bag that is big enough to fit over your showerhead and half fill it with vinegar.
- Tie the bag over the head until it is completely submerged in the vinegar and use some string or an elastic band to tie it in place.
- Leave for at least 30 minutes, preferably longer. If your shower head is brass, do not leave it in the vinegar for any longer than 30 minutes.
- Turn on the shower to flush out any deposits left inside the showerhead.
- Repeat the process if necessary until all the limescale has gone.

Method 2: Specialist limescale cleaners

There are many brands of sprays on the market that are especially designed to remove limescale. If you have a heavy build-up that is proving resistant to vinegar, then your local supermarket will no doubt stock a range of sprays that will do the job. However, be careful when using these that you following the instructions.