

EXTERIOR DIY

# HOW TO REPLACE AND CLEAN GUTTERS

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AS

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## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Take this into store with you to make sure you get everything in one trip. For this project the following materials and equipment are required:

### MATERIAL:

- Solvent cement
- Methylated spirits
- Screws
- Spouting
- Spouting fitting
- PVC downpipe

### TOOLS:

- String line or chalk line
- Battery driver and bits
- Spirit level
- Tape
- Ruler
- Hacksaw – fine tooth PVC saw
- Hammer
- Ladder, trestle and planks, and/or scaffolding
- Pencil
- Cloth
- Square
- Gutter scoop
- Gutter guard

## CLEANING

### Preparation

- Before beginning work on cleaning your gutters, ensure you set up your ladder correctly, taking the proper precautions.
- To prevent debris from going into the downpipes and potentially blocking them, use a large rag and block the downpipe at the top - where it is attached to the gutter. Ensure this is secure; you don't want the rag to go down the pipe.
- When cleaning your gutters, you can also use a downpipe water diverter to keep your drains clean and free of blockages. The device simply fixes into your existing downpipes (installed within minutes and there's no gluing required) and with one simple click you open up the flap to start diverting your roof debris. When not in use, the flap is closed and the water will flow normally through the length of your downpipe and into your stormwater drain or water storage tank.

### Clearing the gutter debris

- After preparing your gutters you can start to carefully remove dirt, leaves or rubbish using a gutter scoop and putting it into a bucket.
- Work your way around the house, emptying the bucket frequently. When you have finished, remove the rag(s) from the downpipes and sluice out the gutters using your garden hose.
- The water should run freely through the gutters. If it runs slowly, or not at all, then you probably have a blocked downpipe.
- The easiest pipes to work on are the plastic variety as they are very simple to dismantle and clean out. So unless you have noticed where the blockage may be, start at the bottom of the pipe. Remove the screws and pipe clips from a section at a time and then raise each section of pipe to free it from the one below.
- Clean out all the sections using long pieces of wood or wire and wash out with a garden hose. Reassemble the downpipe in the reverse order (from the top to the bottom).
- Other pipe systems that are not so easy to dismantle will need to be cleared by other means. If the blockage is near the top or bottom of the pipe, poking with a length of strong wire will sometimes be successful, old wire coat hangers are useful for this job.
- There are a few ways you may notice your guttering is blocked. You may notice during a downpour of rain, or it may become apparent when sluicing out your gutter after cleaning if the water does not flow freely to the downpipe, or water seeps out from where the downpipe joins. These are all possible indications of a blocked downpipe.

- After clearing the blockage, wash out the pipe with water. Depending on the circumstances and shape of your downpipe it may be possible to feed a garden hose up the pipe from the bottom and then turn the water on full; this can be very successful. Other methods are to use long thin rods, or hire a drain snake from the local hire centre.

### Mitre 10 Handy Hints:

- **Blocked and overflowing gutters can cause a lot of damage both inside and outside your home. It's best to clear your gutters twice a year in late autumn (to remove fallen leaves and debris) and late spring (to clear left over debris from winter). At the very least you should clear your gutters once a year.**

## MAINTENANCE

- Remember, problems such as blocked downpipes can be prevented with a little maintenance at the right time. You can reduce the chances of gutters becoming blocked by using plastic mesh designed to prevent debris getting into the guttering. The mesh fits snugly into the top of the gutter and acts like a filter.
- A good idea would be to install a gutter protector to help prevent leaves from blocking your spouting. Many varieties of these are available just ask at the plumbing or trade counter at Mitre 10 for the best solution for your house.
- Even if you have some kind of gutter filter in place, you still need to check your guttering system at least once a year to be safe. It is important to ensure the gutters and downpipes flow freely because overflowing gutters can cause corrosion and damage to your house.



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## REPLACE SPOUTING

- Assemble your scaffold and drop cloth around your work area and ensure appropriate safety equipment is at hand. Check the roof overhang beyond fascia is less than 50mm.
- Establish low points of installation. These are identified by existing downpipes or stormwater outlets.
- Secure string line to fascia, using a screw from the first bracket to the low point. Ensure a fall of 5mm for every 10 metres of run.
- Mark and secure brackets no more than 500mm apart. In high wind or snow prone areas reduce spacing to 300mm. Use a minimum of 3 nails or 3 stainless steel screws per bracket.
- Minimum screw is No.6 x 25mm coarse thread countersunk. NOTE: GIB® clouts must NOT be used.
- Use the back plate to ensure outlet is straight against string line. In a run exceeding 10 metres, an expansion outlet or expansion joiner must be used and remember, do not solvent cement spouting into expansion outlet.
- Secure outlet to back plate. Place brackets within 50mm either side of outlet.
- When required, solvent cement corners onto correct end of the spouting using PVC solvent cement.
- For internal brackets, position front of spouting into front of bracket, then roll spouting into back of bracket until secure. For external brackets, position back of spouting into back of bracket, then roll spouting into front of bracket until secure.
- Bring the two lengths of spouting together to marked point on expansion outlet.
- Solvent cement any remaining corners and use an expansion joiner to connect any remaining lengths if continuous runs exceed 10 metres.
- Ensure project is safe and complete. Clean any excess PVC solvent cement from corners or joiners to minimise potential pooling of water. Ensure spouting is correctly secured to each bracket and space has been provided for expansion and contraction.

## REPLACE DOWNPIPES

- Connect downpipe bend to spouting outlet using a screw to hold bend in place. Do not solvent cement bend to outlet.
- Measure and cut the downpipe to suit your offset requirement. Remember to allow for the depth of the socket and the downpipe bracket distance from the wall.
- Solvent cement all remaining elbows to downpipe on ground, before completing offset installation.
- Use a level or plumb line to mark where the downpipe will sit against the wall. Ensure brackets are spaced no more than 1.2 metres apart.

- Connect downpipe to access pit, surface drainage or stormwater outlet.
- Ensure brackets are secured with at least 2 stainless steel screws so the downpipe can be removed for cleaning if necessary. NOTE - PVC spouting and downpipes are not designed for a concealed system or for use in wall cavities.
- Ensure project is complete and joints are clean.
- Surface areas to be joined must be clean, dry and free from burrs.
- Solvent cement should be applied evenly to both surfaces being joined.
- Any surplus solvent cement should be removed immediately with a damp, clean, lint free cloth. Leave sitting for 10 minutes.



Damaged guttering spoils the look of your home and makes a mess every time it rains. Replacing the guttering can be a fair sized job, but if you follow the instructions laid out in this guide there is no reason why you can't tackle the task yourself.

Spouting and downpipes are intuitively designed as a modular guttering system, making installation, repair and replacement much simpler.

Cleaning out your guttering is a far easier job and something well worth doing at least once or twice a year. You'll find the basics on gutter clearing and cleaning after the installation section.

### STAY SAFE:

- Read all the instructions accompanying the product before beginning your project.
- Check if you need to seek permission from your Local Council before beginning.
- It is recommended that you consult a certified tradesperson before you start, especially if connecting downpipes to stormwater pipes.



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