

How to Clean Your Dryer Vent

Even if you clean your dryer's lint filter after every use - lint still builds up in the duct that vents outside. When it does, it can take longer to dry your clothes and there's real danger of it starting a fire. Cleaning your dryer vent can help prevent this and it's pretty easy.

Clean Inside and Outside

- Unplug your dryer. If it's a gas dryer, turn the supply valve off while you work to prevent gas from leaking or accidentally igniting.
- Pull the dryer away from the wall, and disconnect the duct.
- Lint tends to collect in the exhaust duct on the back of the dryer.
- Loosen up debris with a flexible dryer vent cleaning brush and vacuum out excess lint.
- Do the same thing where the dryer vents outside. You may need to remove the vent hood

Check for Damage

- Check your ductwork for damage. If it's punctured dented or kinked, replace it. Lint can collect there.
- Vinyl and foil ducts are easy to install, but they can droop and trap lint in their ridges. Metal ducts are more likely to keep a fire contained.

Replacing Dryer Vent and Ducts

- The vent hood screws in place over the exterior opening. Choose one that lets air and debris escape without letting in critters, cold drafts or weather.
- Measure the length of the duct you're replacing from the back of the dryer to the outside.
- Get replacement vent pipe that's the right diameter, 4 inches is usually the standard, but check your owners' manual. Smaller ducts could restrict the airflow and larger can increase the amount of lint that builds up.
- Disconnect the dryer's vent hood. Using the metal collar from the old vent as a guide, cut a new collar to the correct length with tin snips. Connect it to the vent hood and slide it all in place from the outside.
- Back inside, one elbow will slide onto the vent hood duct and another on to the dryer exhaust.
- Connect the duct lengths between the elbows.
- Tighten the clamps or zip ties at the connection points and seal the seams with foil tape.

Helpful Tips To Prevent Dryer Fires

- Clear the dryer filter after **every** load of laundry
- Clean your ducts twice a year – more if your dryer's put to heavy use
- Don't run the dryer when you leave the house
- Upgrade to rigid metal ductwork
- Attach a safety alarm to the dryer vent. It can warn you when lint builds up.
- If your dryer vent has a lot of twists and turns or longer runs, you may want to call in a pro.

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NOTE: Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.