



UNITED TRIBES  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
LAND GRANT EXTENSION

# UTTC LAND GRANT EXTENSION

## UTTC Lifeskills Lessons – Managing Home & Self

### Lesson 31: Do it Yourself (DIY) Small Home Repair Projects

LS00031

#### SENECA QUOTE

“He who would do great things should not attempt them all alone.”

*Seneca*



#### RESOURCES

- Plumbing Information source - [www.diyadvice.com/diy/plumbing/prep/know-your-limits/](http://www.diyadvice.com/diy/plumbing/prep/know-your-limits/)
- Video – This Old House: Avoid Plumbing Mistakes - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDK\\_5nPiPJO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDK_5nPiPJO) (2.33 minutes)
- Video – This Old House: How to Install a New Toilet - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=wM-6bgV7G5s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wM-6bgV7G5s) (8.4 minutes)
- Video – How to Fix a Drippy Faucet - [www.deltafaucet.com/design-innovation/inspiredliving/video-how-to-fix-a-dripping-faucet](http://www.deltafaucet.com/design-innovation/inspiredliving/video-how-to-fix-a-dripping-faucet) (3.5 minutes)
- Local plumbers, electricians, repair entrepreneurs – google or use the yellow pages in the phone book for a list
- Video – How to Wire a Broken lamp - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogsQGw5k1Y0id](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogsQGw5k1Y0id)
- Video - <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Fix-a-Broken-Electrical-Cord-Wire/>

#### RUNNING WATER AND ELECTRIC LIGHT!

Less than 100 years ago people could not imagine these fascinating and mysterious intentions.

How can you maintain the many expected luxuries your home now has?

#### EVALUATE YOUR DO IT YOURSELF (DIY) ABILITIES!

Whether it is a drippy faucet, a broken toilet flush handle, a frayed electric lamp cord, or a squeaky door, how can you become Mr. /Ms. Fix-it and a bit more self-sufficient? If you are willing to learn and able to grip a plier; most home fix-it projects are within your abilities. However, some are time-consuming and involve skills from an expert. Ask question, check out advice from people or the computer, if you understand your limits and the constraints of time, you can make repair projects safe and enjoyable.

For example, plumbing repairs like a clogged drain, drippy faucet, loose faucet handles, toilet tank running water all the time, and water on the floor under the toilet; are all simple repair projects. To fix many things, you will need to know where the water shut off valve and electrical breakers or fuses are in your home. There are videos on the web that might be very helpful as you prepare and do the project step-by-step. In addition, stores like Lowe’s, Home Depot, True Value and Menards have resource people to talk you through the repair project, if you ask. Even a well-planned project can become a problem. Always have a back-up or Plan B in case of an emergency. You may find yourself in need of tools or parts, so work during store business hours. Plan plumbing projects carefully because plumbing fixtures (sinks, toilets, and tubs) will be unusable until you have finished the repair job and the water is turned back on.

#### SQUEAKY DOOR HINGES:

Spray a little WD-40 onto the hinges, moving the door back and forth to work in the lubricant. Or try rubbing the hinges with petroleum jelly. If these tricks don’t work, lift the hinge pins about halfway and lubricate them with three-in-one oil, using a rag to catch drips



#### REMOVE STAINS FROM TUB OR SINK:

Combine equal amounts of cream of tartar and baking soda with enough lemon juice to make a paste. Rub the mixture into the stain with your fingers or a soft cloth. Let sit for a half hour, then rinse well with water.



## **PATCH A HOLE IN DRYWALL:**

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Holes in walls are nearly unavoidable. However, unless you've plowed a car through the wall, you can fix most holes inexpensively. The simplest holes to fix are going to be screw or nail holes from hanging everything from pictures to TVs. For holes like these, you'll want to clean the area of any debris and wipe off the wall. Use a putty knife to press some spackle into the wall and let it dry. Once it's done, use some fine grain sandpaper to sand it down until it's nice and flat. Depending on how seamless you need it to be and what color your walls are, you may need to apply a coat of paint.

Larger holes can be a bit trickier. If a doorknob or fist went through the wall, you'll need to cut out a rectangular section of the drywall surrounding the hole. Then, cut a piece of drywall from some scraps (or whole pieces you can buy at a hardware store). You can also use a small piece of wood to brace the scrap drywall in the hole by placing it inside the wall and drilling screws into it above and below the hole, then add a third screw into the drywall patch, and add some drywall tape around the seams. Finish it off by slathering on some joint compound and using a large putty knife to scrape it down until it's mostly flat. Just like with the small holes, you'll finish it off by sanding it down after the compound has dried. Paint if necessary. Tools/Supplies you'll need:

- Putty knife
- Spackle/joint compound
- Drywall
- Drywall tape
- 1x1 wood board
- Electric drill
- Wood screws



## **FIX OR REPLACE A BROKEN TOILET LEVER OR FLAPPER:**

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A broken toilet lever or worn flapper is pretty easy to fix. In most cases, if pressing the lever doesn't flush the toilet, you can just lift the tank top off and re-attach the chain. However, in some cases, the handle itself can become corroded or pieces that connect the handle to the flapper (including the handle, nut, metal rod, or chain) can break. All of these parts can be replaced. You will need to purchase the broken or worn part. Tools/materials you'll need:

- Adjustable wrench
- Replacement toilet lever kit (if broken)

## **UNCLOGGING A TOILET DRAIN:**

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Before you call a plumber to unclog a toilet, there are two things you should try. The first is a plunger. Be sure you're using the right tool for the job. Buy a toilet plunger not a sink plunger.

If there's not much water in the toilet bowl, use a pitcher to pour enough water in the stool to submerge the head of the plunger. Give it 8-10 good downward thrusts. Most minor clogs should clear up at this point and water should flow freely. If not, it's auger time. Toilet augers typically cost a little more than plungers, but they can deal with tougher clogs. Run the end of the auger into the toilet until the end reaches the clog and start turning the crank. If you get a good grip on it, you should be able to pull the clog out.

## **REPLACING ELECTRICAL CORDS:**

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Damaged electrical cords are dangerous. When you notice a frayed or chewed cord, unplug it immediately. It's very simple to replace a cord. After unplugging it from the wall outlet, use a wire to snip the cord off from the appliance. Tape the new cord to it with electrical tape and then draw the new cord up through the lamp stem by pulling the old cord out from the top. Remove the tape from the cords and discard the old cord. It is safer to buy new appliance if the cord becomes badly damaged. Wires that are twisted together and secured with wire nuts are easy to undo. Just remove the wire nuts, untwist the wires, and reverse the process with a new cord (strip 1/2 inch of insulation from the wire ends). If the cord's ends are soldered to terminals and you know soldering techniques, you can remove the old cord and solder a replacement to the terminals. Otherwise, leave this work to an appliance repair person.

When you replace a cord, be sure to use an identical replacement; take the defective cord with you to the hardware store or electrical supply company to find a match.



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## DO IT YOURSELF (DIY)

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To discuss a basic assessment process for self-identify of skills and safety precautions needed for small home repairs.
2. To support individual concerns or ideas for do-it-yourself repair projects.
3. To observe or practice one or more small home repair project.
4. To connect with community and web-based experts to observe small repair projects.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

1. Write objectives on the board.
2. Distribute Lesson 31 Talking Sheet: Do It Yourself (DIY) Small Home Repairs.
3. Ask for a volunteer to open the session with a prayer, offer a prayer asking the Creator to help support individual responsibility in maintaining and protecting our homes, or begin the session with a minute of silence.
4. Introduce the topic of DIY home repairs – read aloud the introductory paragraph and ask each participant to self- assess their abilities, confidence and interest in doing self-home repairs. Ask participants to share experience.
5. Have participants take turns reading aloud the information in the small home repair tips on the Lesson 31 Talking Sheet.
6. Present one of the videos listed below.
7. Facilitate discussion after viewing the video to allow questions, build confidence, and share ideas and advice.
8. Ask a local repair expert (professional or non-professional with experience) to join the session and repair one item (broken electrical cord on a vacuum cleaner or lamp, hole in a wall, electric light switch, etc.).
9. Distribute and collect the Evaluation.

#### **RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTION SUPPORT:**

1. Plumbing Information source - [www.diyadvice.com/diy/plumbing/prep/know-your-limits/](http://www.diyadvice.com/diy/plumbing/prep/know-your-limits/)
2. Video - This Old House: Avoid Plumbing Mistakes - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDK\\_5nPiPJ0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDK_5nPiPJ0) (2.33 minutes)
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4. Video – How to Fix a Drippy Faucet - [www.deltafaucet.com/design-innovation/inspiredliving/video-how-to-fix-a-dripping-faucet](http://www.deltafaucet.com/design-innovation/inspiredliving/video-how-to-fix-a-dripping-faucet) (3.5 minutes)
5. Local plumbers, electricians, repair entrepreneurs – google or use the yellow pages in the phone book for a list
6. Video – How to Wire a Broken lamp-[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqsQGW5k1Y0id](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqsQGW5k1Y0id)
7. Video-<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Fix-a-Broken-Electrical-Cord-Wire/>

#### **TIME:**

50 minutes





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*On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being least confident and 5 being most confident, please circle one per question.*

***Not Confident***

***Very Confident***

Please rate how confident you are in assessing your abilities in doing small home repairs.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Please rate how comfortable you feel in repairing small repair project after this session.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Please rate if your confidence increased regarding small home repair after this session.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

Please rate how confident you are in connecting with repair experts or resources within the community.

1                                  2                                  3                                  4                                  5

***New things I learned or understand better because of the lesson***

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***Comments***

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**EVALUATION**

