

Toilets are notorious for their hidden leaks, and they can waste thousands of gallons of water a day undetected. A toilet will leak when it is out of adjustment or when its parts are worn. A toilet usually leaks at the overflow pipe or the flapper valve. When the toilet is running, it is obvious that the toilet needs repair. However, flapper valve leaks are not as easy to detect. Usually you cannot hear the leak because it runs slowly out of the tank. The easiest way to discover if your toilet leaks is to follow these easy steps:

1. Lift off the lid from your toilet tank.
2. Place three or four drops of ordinary food coloring into the toilet tank. (*Do not use dye, it could stain your toilet.*)
3. Do not flush your toilet or otherwise disturb the toilet for one or two hours.
4. At the end of the waiting period, observe the toilet bowl. If the color you placed into the tank shows up in the bowl, you have a leak. Even if you do not see color in the bowl, you still may need to replace the flapper valve if you occasionally have to jiggle the toilet handle or hear a low hum.

After several years and/or many flushings', the flapper valve can be knocked out of shape or simply worn out. To stop the leaks, see your hardware dealer or home improvement store and obtain an inexpensive and easy to install replacement valve or complete replacement kit.

