



The UK's most commonly asked home maintenance questions

**Is my shower making me sick?
Why do my electrics smell of fish?**

They may sound like odd things to ponder, but they're just some of the most commonly asked home maintenance questions in the UK.

Our experts have been busy analysing Google search data to discover the maintenance issues that cause the most concern (and confusion) to UK residents.

Aspect's director of operations, Nick Bizley oversees all of our trade operations, says:

"While some of the queries are quite obscure, it's a positive sign that we're so curious about our homes and what makes them tick. As long as people take the relevant health and safety precautions - especially concerning ladders and tools - and they don't tackle any tasks that involve safety regulations, like gas or electric work, it can be extremely rewarding to figure out and fix our own home maintenance problems. There's a lot of great advice online to help with this too.

"It's also a good sign that so many of the queries - such as "is my roof safe to walk on?" or "are my windows energy efficient?" suggest that the UK has a healthy curiosity about safety and energy efficiency."

Not only did our research team discover the most commonly asked questions, they've also provided the answers. So if you've ever wondered if your shower was making you ill or why your toilet seat was turning a funny colour, keep reading to find out.



Roofs

Is my roof...

Is my roof slate or tile?

You can typically tell the difference by looking at your roof; slates are normally grey-blue in colour, very thin and rectangular (normally), fitting adjacently to each other. Tiled roofs come in a variety of colours and can come in a range of different shapes and contours such as ridged or corrugated. Tiles are much thicker than slates and are often found overlapping/interlocking each other. The only real exception to this is when you have clay roof tiles, these can have a very similar shape and formation to a slate roof but will be considerably thicker than slate.

Is my roof leaking?

Signs that your roof is leaking include discolouration to the ceiling and walls on the top floor or in the loft, damp around the upper parts of walls and of course any signs of dripping.

Is my roof asbestos?

Asbestos was banned in the UK in 1985, so if your house was built after then it's unlikely, although asbestos cement was used up until 1999. It's hard to tell with a visual examination as asbestos is contained within insulation tiles. Always seek professional advice and **NEVER** attempt to remove what you believe may be asbestos yourself.

Is my roof suitable for solar?

Assuming your roof faces south, possibly. The ideal pitch angle for a roof to house solar panels is between 35-40 degrees but anywhere between 10 and 60 degrees is suitable. You will also need access to your roof space in order to install an inverter (approximately the size of a microwave oven).

Is my roof leaking or is it condensation?

A leak will usually be a consistent flow of water, triggered by rainfall or ice and snow. Condensation forms in your loft or attic space when moist air is trapped by your insulation.

Is my roof covered by insurance?

Most roofs are covered by buildings and contents policies. Always check the small print.

Is my roof south facing?

A quick way to check this is to look at your home on Google Maps or simply use a compass or compass app on your smartphone.

Is my roof strong enough to walk on?

It's never worth trying to find out. Only trained professionals with the right safety gear and technical knowledge should attempt this.

Why is my roof...

Why is my roof leaking?

There are number of reasons for a leak, including loose or damaged slates and tiles, damaged guttering, corroded or damaged roof flashings, old or ineffective pointing and weather damage.

Why is my roof green or covered in moss?

Moss and algae typically grow on roofs that are shaded either because they are north facing or have overhanging trees/shrubs preventing direct sunlight. This combined with warmth coming from the loft space below provides the perfect warm, damp environment for moss and algae to thrive.

Why is my roof sagging?

There are a number of reasons including; framing issues, timber rot, weakened beams/joists, a change of roof covering which is heavier than the original. Seek advice from a professional.

Ceilings

Is my ceiling...

Is my ceiling Artex?

Artex ceilings have a white, brushstroke textured finish. They're created with Artex, a branded surface coating for interior walls and ceilings. Until the mid 80's Artex was made with white asbestos to strengthen it. If you have any uncertainty about the age of Artex please consult a specialist.

Is my ceiling asbestos?

Asbestos was added to Artex to strengthen it before it was banned in 1999. Ceilings plastered pre-1985 are likely to contain asbestos. If your house was built between 1985 and 1999 it might contain asbestos, but houses built after 2000 will be asbestos free. If you're unsure, you should have your ceilings tested by a professional before disturbing it or replastering.

Is my ceiling going to collapse?

There are many indicators including sagging and dropping, visible cracks on the ceiling, cracking sounds, doors and windows out of alignment or unable to close, and bends in the roof support. If you're in any doubt call in a professional to either prop it up or take it down and replace it.

Is my ceiling plaster or concrete?

Even if your ceiling doesn't look like it's made of concrete, there could be concrete underneath the plaster. It's best to ask an expert if you're unsure. If it's made from plasterboard with a covering of plaster it will sound hollow when you tap it whereas a concrete ceiling covered with plaster will sound solid.

Is my ceiling supposed to wobble?

No. This is a sign your ceiling could be damaged or unstable, so should be checked by a professional.

Why is my ceiling...

Why is my ceiling wet?

Condensation might appear if the air in a room is warm and damp. This can be prevented by improving ventilation. A damp ceiling could be caused by condensation forming due to moist warm air and insufficient ventilation, or it could be caused by penetrating damp or a leak from the building's structure.

Why is my ceiling leaking?

Water will follow the easiest route, so the source of a ceiling leak might not be obvious at first. There are many potential causes including plumbing problems, roof damage, an issue with the room above, and more. Book one of our leak detection experts to confirm.

Why is my ceiling cracking?

Ceiling cracks can be cosmetic or a sign of something more serious. Very fine hairline cracks are more often than not just cosmetic and follow the wall/ceiling joints or plasterboard joints. Other cracks are caused by problems with the roof, building structure and between foundations tend to be bigger in appearance and often run diagonally. If in doubt call in a professional to confirm.

Why is my ceiling making noise?

Cracking and creaking sounds can be a sign your ceiling is unstable or under a lot of strain. There could also be central heating pipework running between the ceiling voids causing the timber joists to expand and contract during temperature change.

Why is my ceiling turning black?

Black stains on a ceiling will almost certainly be mould caused by poor ventilation where warm, moist air stagnates. This can be dangerous if left untreated, so it's important to get a professional in to check the stains and upgrade ventilation if required. Black mould could also occur due to a leak.

Windows

Why are my windows...

Why are my windows wet?

Condensation on the interior glass during winter occurs when warm air touches the cold glass, this can be improved by installing trickle vents and/or improving ventilation. Condensation between the window panes generally means the glass unit seal is damaged or has failed and needs replacing.

Why are my windows so cold?

Cold windows can simply be a result of particularly cold weather outside. A damaged seal on double or triple glazed windows could also let cold air in between the panes.

Why are my windows steamed up outside?

Condensation or fog on external double glazing usually isn't a bad sign - it demonstrates your windows are doing their job and keeping the cold and damp out.

Why are my windows fogging up?

Windows will fog up on the inside if there's a lot of moisture in a room. This is common in bathrooms and kitchens, which need to be well ventilated to let moisture out. Try installing trickle vents and depending on the room or install an extractor fan or an air brick.

Are my windows...

Are my windows FENSA registered?

You can find out if your windows are FENSA registered at fensa.org.uk/fensa-certificate

Are my windows leaking air?

If you think your windows have become less efficient and let cold air in, a technician can test them for you and give you an accurate assessment. There are many different draught excluding measures you can take before having to replace windows.

Are my windows energy efficient?

The glass, space between panes, and frame materials can all affect energy efficiency. Signs of inefficient windows include seal damage, interior moisture and condensation, air leaks, and old weatherstripping.

Are my windows double-pane?

If your window has two panes of glass, with a space between them it's double-paned, also known as double glazed units.

Are my windows under warranty?

You'll need to check warranty details on your original paperwork from the company who fitted the windows.

Doors

Is my door...

Is my door a fire door?

A fire door closes completely with no gaps, is labelled as a certified fire door, sealed tightly around the door frame, and has all hinges firmly fixed in place. If your door does not have a certified label you cannot be 100% sure.

Is my door uPVC or composite?

A uPVC door is made entirely from plastic, while a composite door is made from a few different materials pressed together. uPVC doors tend to be much thinner than composite, normally around 28mm rather than 44mm for the composite. Composite doors also tend to be much more varied in colour and styles.

Is my door fire rated?

The British Woodworking Federation (BWF) label doors with a certification. You can find the different ratings at firesafe.org.uk/fire-doors – if it doesn't have a label you can't be 100% sure.

Is my door inswing or outswing?

An inswing door opens in towards the property, while an outswing door opens towards the outside of the property.

Is my door hollow?

If the door's stained, it's likely to be solid core. A painted door is generally hollow core. If you give your door a good tap you should be able to hear if it has a hollow sound rather than a more solid sound. Price is also a good indication, as hollow doors are cheaper to make.

Why is my door...

Why is my door creaking?

A creaking sound will probably be coming from the hinges. They could just need a bit of oil or may be old and need replacing. The door itself may have warped/expanded and is catching the frame in which case it will need planing down to fit.

Why is my door latch sticking?

The latch might be sticking inside the door, have become misaligned, or be completely stuck. The door may have dropped causing the latch to be misaligned.

Why is my door not locking?

There could be a problem with the key or the lock itself. The door may have dropped and misaligned the lock. To find out for sure, a locksmith is the best person to ask.

Why is my door handle stiff?

If a door handle is sticking, it's usually a problem with the latch jamming or being obstructed by something. The door may have warped causing it to stick against the frame and is then difficult to open.

Why is my door handle loose?

The screws holding the door handle in place have probably come loose.

Why is my door hard to open?

Wood shrinks and expands in different temperatures, so the door can start sticking in the door frame. It may need planing down to fit.

Walls

Are my walls...

Are my walls insulated?

The simplest indicator is usually how warm your house feels. If you're spending a lot on heating but don't feel much benefit, insulation could be an issue. If your walls are cold to touch, they most likely aren't. A qualified professional can do more thorough tests to check your insulation.

Are my walls plaster?

If you turn the power off at the mains and unscrew a plug socket from the wall, you should be able to see what your walls have been lined with. Always ensure the electricity is switched off before doing this.

Are my walls cavity or solid?

Houses built after the 1920s usually have cavity walls. It's also possible to tell from the pattern of the brickwork outside. Solid brick wall patterns often alternate between the long and short sides of the brick. A solid brick wall will be approximately 230mm thick whereas a cavity brick wall will be more like 300mm as it contains 2 skins of brickwork and insulation.

Are my walls asbestos?

If your house was built before 1980, it could have asbestos in the walls. Before you redecorate or renovate, ask a professional to check for asbestos.

Are my walls load-bearing?

Load-bearing walls carry the structure of the house from the roof to the foundations. This includes exterior walls and walls at right angles to the floor joists. If you're not sure, ask an expert to check it for you.

Why are my walls...

Why are my walls damp?

Condensation builds up on walls when there's lots of moisture in the air. The ventilation probably needs to be improved. Damp in the walls usually comes from the structure or foundations of the house. You may have rising or penetrative damp. A specialist should be called in to confirm.

Why are my walls black or mouldy?

Black stains are more than likely black mould, caused by poor warm, moist air and poor ventilation. This can be dangerous if left untreated, so it's important to get a professional in to check the stains and mould spores and improve ventilation.

Why are my walls cold?

Cold walls normally mean that they aren't well insulated and they allow the warm air inside to quickly dissipate through the wall to the outside rather than the warm air being held in by wall insulation.

Why are my walls turning yellow?

Lightly coloured alkyd paint can sometimes discolour if it doesn't get enough light exposure. Exposure to ammonia, cigarette smoke, and excess cooking oil can also turn light coloured walls yellow. Patches of yellow can also be an indication of damp or leaks.

Why are my walls sweating?

The 'sweat' is probably condensation, which builds up on walls when there's lots of moisture in the air and poor ventilation. Ventilation of the space should be improved.

Why are my walls sticky?

Cigarette smoke can build up on the walls and leave a sticky residue. Sticky walls in kitchens are more likely to be from cooking without an extractor hood and a gradual build-up of grease residue. More unusually, leftover wallpaper paste can sometimes reactivate and feel sticky to the touch.

Floors

Is my floor...

Is my floor laminate or wood?

Natural wood has a real wood grain which is clear to see when you look closely whereas, laminate floors are actually printed on top of a core board with a transparent wear resistant layer on top. Wood is also more easily damaged, so if there are scratches, dents, or water marks, it's likely to be real hardwood.

Is my floor strong enough for tiles?

Ideally you would install tiles onto a solid floor but you can make timber floors acceptably rigid. Basically, if you walk on the floor and you can feel any bounce/movement it will need reinforcing.

Is my floor waxed?

If you can feel the texture of the grain when you rub your hand across the wood, it's likely it's waxed. To be sure, you can gently rub an area of the wood with white spirit. If there's wax, the cloth will be slightly discoloured.

Is my floor sinking?

Some floors are naturally uneven, but any sudden changes could be a sign of subsidence. Measure the distance between fixed items on your walls and your floor, such as the skirting boards. If this distance increases you have some movement and need professional advice.

Is my floor level?

You can test this yourself with a long spirit level.

Is my floor going to collapse?

Only a professional can definitively answer this question, but a bouncy floor, sudden unevenness and cracking can be a bad sign.

Why is my floor...

Why is my floor so cold?

Non-carpeted flooring can be a lot colder to the touch. Even carpeted flooring can be cooler than the rest of the room as heat rises, and gaps underneath doors can create draughts. You may have an uninsulated concrete floor?

Why is my floor damp?

If there's no obvious leak, it could be damp in the brickwork or structure of the house. You may not have a damp proof membrane or it may have been damaged. Damp in the brickwork or structure of the house can be problematic/dangerous if left untreated, so it's important to get a professional in to check your flooring if it's persistently damp.

Why is my floor creaking?

Creaking floors are usually a problem in older houses, but not always. It's often caused by the floorboards rubbing against the support joists underneath. This can be addressed by additional fixings/gluing but can be quite disruptive in some instances.

Why is my floor uneven?

An uneven floor is normally due to the subbase below being uneven but it can also be caused by things like water leaks, these can warp floor finishes causing them to distort and change shape.

Taps

Is my tap...

Is my tap water safe to drink?

Unless you've been advised otherwise your tap water in the UK that is mains fed is safe to drink. Water that comes from a storage tank should never be used for drinking as bacteria can breed in the tank.

Is my tap water making me ill?

Tap water in the UK is unlikely to be making you ill. Water can, however, taste very different in different areas due to the chlorine added to it making it safe for us to drink. If you think tap water is making you ill check to see if it's coming from a mains supply rather than a storage tank. You should never drink water from a storage tank as it might contain bacteria that could certainly make you ill.

Is my tap water recycled?

UK tap water comes fresh from many different sources including water treatment plants so yes tap water has been recycled.

Is my tap water hard or soft?

The hardness or softness of your water depends on where you live in the UK. You can find more details at scaleguard.co.uk/hard-water-areas.html

Is my tap water fluorinated?

Fluoride is found naturally in most water supplies, but water supplied to some areas of the North West have added fluoride.

Why are my taps...

Why are my taps stiff?

If a tap handle has become difficult to turn, it could be because the mechanism needs cleaning, or a part has become worn over time.

Why are my taps not working?

Has your water main been turned off for any reason? There could be a blockage, frozen pipe, or a problem with the tap mechanism itself. Call in a professional plumber.

Why are my taps noisy?

A noisy tap could be a sign there's too much pressure building up, the washer's faulty or doesn't fit.

Why are my taps vibrating?

There are a few potential causes, ranging from a faulty washer, pressure build-up or it's even slightly loose.

Why are my taps spluttering?

A spluttering tap suggests there's an airlock in the pipes. If it persists, it's best to call a professional plumber to remove the airlock.

Sinks & Drains

Why is my sink...

Why is my sink leaking?

You need to identify where the leak comes from to find out the reason. Common causes are a faulty waste pipe or sink trap, a loose tap connection, or normal wear and tear.

Why is my sink blocked?

Kitchen and bathroom sinks can become blocked fairly easily with regular use. Food, hair, soap, fats and oils, small pieces of plastic, cotton buds, tooth picks, dental floss and other debris are usually the main culprits.

Why is my sink gurgling?

This is a sign your waste pipes aren't vented properly or have a partial blockage.

Why is my sink gurgling when I flush the toilet?

This is a sign your pipes aren't vented properly.

Why is my sink backing up?

If your sink has a blockage or the pipework doesn't have the correct gradient, it won't drain properly because the water can't flow freely. It needs unblocking and checking for correct gradients.

Why is my sink turning yellow?

The minerals in hard water can gradually turn white sinks yellowish in colour.

Are my drains...

Are my drains adopted?

Your drains will most likely be publicly owned but there are still some private or unadopted sewers, which would most likely be found if you live on a site with multiple properties, e.g. a block of flats. If you're unsure you should ask your local authority.

Are my drains blocked?

There are various signs of a blockage including; overflowing, water draining slowly, a bad smell, and gurgling noises.

Are my drains gurgling?

Yes your drains could be 'gurgling'. If your drain makes a noise it is commonly caused by a blockage or extra air in the pipes.

Why are my drains...

Why are my drains smelling?

A nasty blockage can sometimes create a bad smell, depending on what's caught in it. If a sink /drain hasn't been used for a while the water in the trap can stagnate and cause a smell. You should flush the stale water through the trap.

Why are my drains backed up?

A blockage can prevent water from flowing freely, so it could overflow. The gradient of the drain pipework could be insufficient, causing the waste to back up and not run away as it should.

Why are my drains slow?

A blockage or partial blockage will prevent water from flowing freely.

Central Heating

Is my central heating...

Is my central heating pump working?

A faulty pump can create leaks, noise, and stop your radiators from heating properly. A plumber will be able to diagnose the issue accurately.

Is my central heating gravity fed?

A gravity fed system will have cold water tanks in the loft space or as high as possible to generate pressure. A gravity fed boiler (also known as conventional central heating) uses gravity to heat the water. While it's heating, cold water falls to the bottom of the heater and hot water rises to the top, until it's all thoroughly heated. This is a common type of boiler. If you're unsure what you have, your original manual or order form should tell you if it's gravity fed or not.

Is my central heating making me ill?

Central heating can cause sinus problems for some people as it dries the air in a room. Generally speaking though, your central heating is unlikely to cause any major health problems. Always have carbon monoxide alarm/sensors installed near your gas boiler/appliances to ensure that there is not an excess amount of carbon monoxide present. The presence of excess levels of carbon monoxide can make you feel ill and ultimately be fatal.

Is my central heating sealed or vented?

A sealed or unvented system is fed directly from the cold mains water and can therefore deliver hot water at mains pressure. This system doesn't require a cold water tank. A vented system will have a cold water tank in the loft which provides the water to the hot water tank below which is also known as a gravity fed system. If you're unsure, your original manual or order form should tell you what system you have.

Is my central heating pressurised?

All combi boilers are pressurised as are some conventional systems. A pressurised system will have a pressure gauge on the boiler, normally on the front fascia but some models have it on the underside. If you have any doubt, contact a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Why is my central heating...

Why is my central heating ticking?

Clicking or ticking noises can be caused by air bubbles trapped in the water, pipe expansion, or pipes knocking against another surface.

Why is my central heating loud or noisy?

A noisy boiler could be 'kettling'. This means hard water is building up and creating limescale inside the boiler. Some pipework may have come loose and is vibrating to cause a noise.

Why is my central heating radiator cold at the bottom?

This suggests water isn't flowing freely through the radiators, possibly caused by a blockage or because your radiators need bleeding. Cold patches at the bottom of a radiator can also indicate the build up of sludge, or magnetite, which prevents heat from being transferred to the radiator panel. A powerflush removes magnetite from a central heating system

Why is my central heating not hot enough?

There could be many reasons why your radiators aren't hot enough. There could be a blockage in the system pipework or radiator, a pump could have failed or there could be air in the system. If your radiators are hot but your house still isn't warm enough, the problem is more likely to be poor insulation. Remember to check your room thermostat setting too.

Boilers

Is my boiler...

Is my boiler gas or electric?

You can check the manual to find out. A gas boiler will have a gas pipe running directly to the boiler.

Is my boiler compatible with Nest or Hive?

If you give Nest, Hive, or your energy supplier, the model number, they should be able to tell you if it's compatible.

Is my boiler pressure too high?

The pressure reader on the front of your boiler should indicate the right level of pressure. If it's pointing to numbers in the red, the pressure might be too high.

Is my boiler still under warranty?

Check your original receipt and paperwork to find out if it's still in warranty. Otherwise contact the manufacturer with the model number.

Why is my boiler...

Why is my boiler not working?

Boiler problems can be caused by low pressure, a faulty pump, a problem with the pipework, freezing pipes, or a faulty valve or thermostat. The pilot on older boilers can sometimes go out and need to be manually reignited.

Why is my boiler leaking water?

A boiler leak suggests there's an issue with a valve or seal. This can be caused by rust, general wear and tear, or possibly structural damage.

Why is my boiler showing an error code?

Different boilers will have different reasons for a flashing light. If in doubt, check the manual for an explanation, or search online for that specific error code.

Why is my boiler beeping?

If your boiler is beeping, it's probably trying to alert you to something. Check the manual to find out the possible reasons and look for error codes on the display.

Why is my boiler buzzing?

Buzzing or humming could mean different things depending on the source of the noise. A professional will be able to diagnose if it's an issue with the boiler itself, the mechanism, or the pipework.

Why is my boiler noisy?

A quiet gurgle is usually normal, but if your boiler is persistently noisy it could suggest a fault. A professional will be able to diagnose if it's an issue with the boiler itself, the mechanism, or the pipework.

Why is my boiler pressure high?

High pressure could be caused by too much water in the system, a fault with the pressure release, parts expanding naturally as they heat up, or an issue with another integral part.

Why is my boiler ticking?

Clicking or ticking noises can be caused by air bubbles trapped in the water, pipe expansion, or pipes knocking against another surface.

Showers

Is my shower...

Is my shower electric?

An electric shower will be separate from your main water heating system and only has a cold water feed. It heats cold water to provide hot water directly. If your central heating system is off you can still have a hot shower. If you're unsure, the manual should explain what type of shower you have.

Is my shower fibreglass or acrylic?

If the shower's surface is cold to the touch, even when the room is warm, it's likely to be fibreglass. Acrylic will feel warm.

Is my shower making me sick?

If you clean your shower head regularly and the silicone sealant is the correct colour and not black it should stay relatively free of bacteria and not cause any health issues at all.

Is my shower drain clogged?

There are various signs of a blockage including; overflowing, water draining slowly, a bad smell, and gurgling noises.

Is my shower valve upside down?

Different sides of a valve have different functions, so an upside down valve might cause some problems. If you're unsure, a professional will be able to check for you.

Why is my shower...

Why is my shower leaking?

There could be a problem with the shower head, the pipe leading to the shower head, or even the structure of the shower area itself. If you're unsure, a professional will be able to find the source of the leak for you.

Why is my shower cold?

There are a few possible reasons why your shower might be running cold. If you're getting hot water in other areas of the house, it's probably an issue with the shower's mechanism. If you're not getting any hot water, it's likely to be an issue with the boiler.

Why is my shower not working?

Water supply can be affected if utility companies are doing a job in your area. It could also be an issue with low pressure, the valve, or a blockage.

Why is my shower so weak?

If you're experiencing weak pressure everywhere in the house, the pump in your boiler may not be working. If it's just the shower, there could be a blockage or even limescale on the shower head.

Why is my shower losing pressure?

You may be losing pressure because of a blockage, an issue with leaking pipework, or a problem with the boiler itself.

Why is my shower blocked?

Minerals in water can create blockages. If you haven't checked your shower head for a while, there could be some limescale build-up.

Why is my shower pump pulsing?

Rather than being a problem with the pump itself, it's likely there's a blockage making the pump work too hard.

Baths

Is my bath...

Is my bath enamel?

Cast iron baths are usually coated in enamel to make them more comfortable. Compared to acrylic, enamel baths are heavier, harder, and scratch resistant. An iron bath makes a more resonant sound when water hits it, a plastic bath makes a duller sound.

Is my bath too hot?

If the temperature of your bath is making you sweat, feel uncomfortable, or light headed, it's too hot.

Why is my bath...

Why is my bath water green?

Green/blue water suggests a problem with copper piping. Elevated copper levels can cause health problems, so it's important to have this fixed by a professional as soon as possible.

Why is my bath water yellow?

There are a few reasons why your bath water could be yellow. Utility companies could have done recent repairs, rust has loosened from your pipes, or there's iron in your water. If this persists, you should ask a plumber to check for issues.

Why is my bath water cold?

There are a few possible reasons why your water might be running cold. If you're getting hot water in other areas of the house, it's probably an issue with the bath's water supply. If you're not getting any hot water, it's likely to be an issue with the boiler.

Why is my bath not draining?

A blockage or partial blockage can prevent water from flowing freely.

Why is my bath water brown?

Brown water suggests rust, minerals, or sediment has found its way into your bath water. This can be unsafe, so it's important to get it checked by a professional if it persists.

Toilets

Is my toilet...

Is my toilet leaking?

The source of a leak might not be immediately obvious, but if the water level is lower than usual in the bowl or the tank, there could be a leak.

Is my toilet blocked?

If your toilet is filling up rather than flushing properly, it's likely there's a blockage.

Is my toilet running?

A running toilet will sound like the toilet is constantly refilling with a steady stream of water this is normally caused by the fill valve in the cistern being stuck and not turning off.

Is my toilet flange too high?

If the flange is too high, your toilet might not be fitted properly and you may be experiencing some leaks from your pipework. As a general rule it should be 1/4 of an inch above the floor.

Why is my toilet...

Why is my toilet seat turning purple?

No one really knows why, but pregnant women sometimes find their toilet seat turns a purple/blue colour. It's also been speculated that some medications can cause the skin to leave a blue/purple mark on plastic. Of course, if you've been wearing a new pair of jeans, it could be that the dye has stained your backside and it's rubbed off.

Why is my toilet running?

Your toilet is most likely running because the fill valve in the cistern is stuck or broken and won't turn off.

Why is my toilet cistern leaking?

A leaking cistern could be a sign your toilet isn't fitted properly, there may be a hairline crack in it or the cistern is overflowing due to the fill valve failing.

Why is my toilet seat coming loose?

If the seat is newly fitted, it might not be attached properly. If it's been fitted for a while, normal wear and tear can loosen it.

Fuse Boxes & Electrics

Is my fuse box...

Is my fuse box illegal?

As long as your fuse box was installed by a certified installer and it's never been tampered with, your fuse box should be perfectly legal. If you're unsure, call a professional to check for you.

Why is my fuse box...

Why is my fuse box beeping?

A beeping fuse box is unusual. Check if there are any other devices in the immediate area such as meters, smoke alarms to see if it could be a battery backup that needs changing. If it persists, you should check with a professional.

Why is my fuse box buzzing?

Buzzing or humming could be a sign of a loose connection. Instead of investigating yourself, call a professional to check for you.

Why is my fuse box tripping?

If your fuse box trips, it's because it's detected a fault and has turned off the power for your own safety. If it keeps tripping, you'll need the help of a professional.

Consumer Unit...

What is a consumer unit?

A consumer unit is the correct name for a 'fuse box, which controls your home's electrical supply.

Are my electrics...

Are my electrics safe?

As long as they were installed by a certified installer, hasn't been tampered with or damaged, your electrics should be perfectly safe. If you have any concerns or any faults, always call a professional electrician to investigate for you.

Are my electrics earthed?

If you're unsure whether your electrics are earthed or not, always call a professional electrician to investigate for you.

Why are my electrics...

Why are my electrics buzzing?

Buzzing or humming could be a sign of a loose connection. Instead of investigating yourself, call a professional to check for you.

Why are my electrics tripping?

If your fuse box trips, it's because it's detected a fault and has turned off the power for your own safety. If it keeps tripping, you'll need the help of a professional.

Stopcocks & Gutters

Stopcock...

Where is my stopcock?

Your stopcock will probably be underneath your kitchen sink. It looks like an old fashioned metal tap.

Where is the stopcock in a Victorian house?

In older houses, the stopcock might be in your basement if you have one, under the stairs or in the hall. If you can't find it, there will be a main isolation point outside the front of the property. If all else fails, one of the best ways to find out is ask your neighbours where theirs is!

Gutters...

Why are my gutters dripping?

Dripping gutters could mean there are holes or cracks in them but most likely it's a connector that either isn't installed correctly or the rubber seals in the connectors have failed.

Why are my gutters so loud?

The noise could be caused by there being debris in the gutters disrupting the flow of water, they could be installed too far away from the edge of the roof, causing the falling water to make more noise than usual or a fixing bracket could have come loose causing them to vibrate/rattle.

Why are my gutters overflowing?

If your guttering is blocked with leaves or other debris, it can cause a blockage and water won't flow easily. If the blockage is big enough, the gutters will completely overflow.

About this study...

By monitoring Google's autocomplete suggestions, which are based on previously entered search terms, the Aspect research team were able to analyse what people had been searching for relating to home maintenance and home repair.

Our team used five separate devices, four different web browsers (Internet Explorer, Google Chrome and Firefox and Apple's version of the Google App) in order to get a broader sample of data.

To get a more accurate picture on the whole, we conducted searches over the ten-day period between January 6th 2019 to January 13th 2019.

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