

# How to Shut Off the Water Supply

## How to turn off the water supply to sinks, toilets, and other plumbing fixtures in your home

When a home's water supply system leaks or a repair to one of the plumbing fixtures is needed, you'll have to shut off the water. It's best to do this at the valve that's closest to the problem. That way, the rest of the house will still have a functioning water supply.



Turn off water to sinks and toilets at the small valve beneath them. Off is clockwise.

## To Shut Off Plumbing Fixtures

Most water-using fixtures and appliances have some type of shut-off valve that allows you to stop the water supply at the fixture without shutting off the water to the entire house.

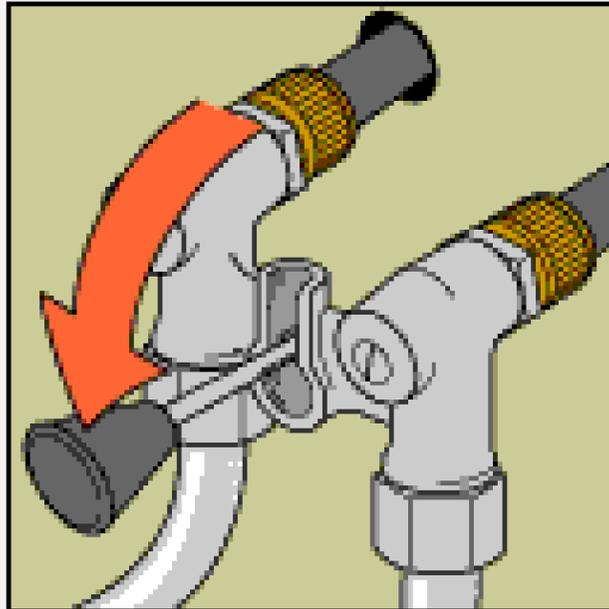


Lever valve controls supply to water heater. Note the red main supply valve in the background.

**To shut off a faucet, toilet, or similar fixture**, first look for a stop valve that's connected to the water supply tubes, located directly under the fixture. This is normally a chrome-plated or plastic valve. Beneath a sink, one serves hot water and one serves cold.

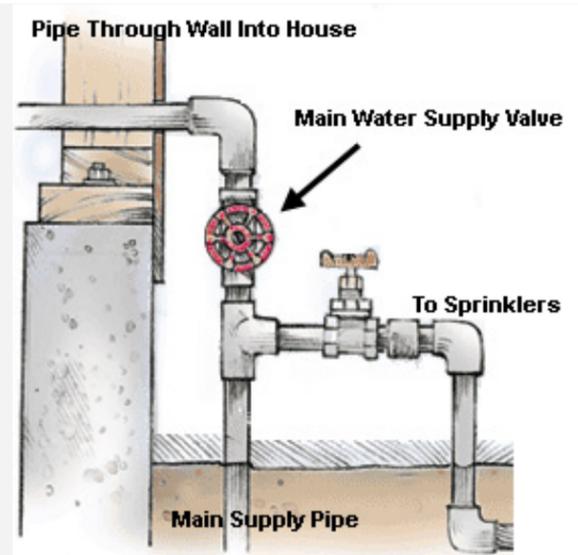
Turn the handle clockwise to shut off a valve. If it is too difficult to turn by hand, try wearing a work glove or gripping the handle with a pair of slip-joint pliers to turn handle.

**To shut off a water heater**, turn off the cold water valve above the water heater.



Lever-type washing machine shutoff valves.

**To shut off the water supply to a washing machine**, just turn off the valve behind the machine. Some washers have simple lever-style valves like the one shown here.



The house's water shutoff valve is usually located just outside (or, in climates where freezing is a problem—inside) an exterior wall.

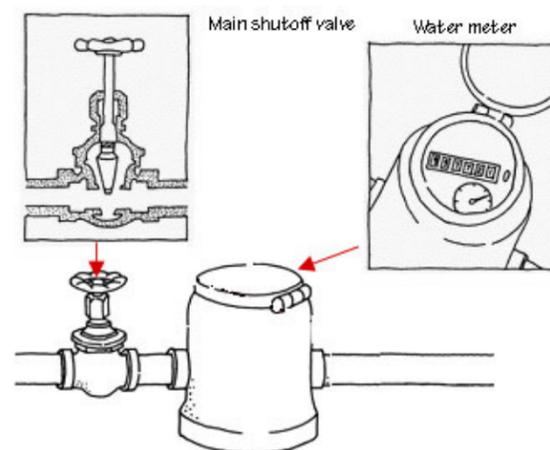
## To Shut Off Water to the Entire House

If you don't find a shutoff valve near a fixture, you can shut off the valve that controls the flow of water to the entire house, normally located near where the cold water pipe enters (the valve will be outside in warm climates, inside in cold climates). In some cases, the valve is located on a pipe right before the water heater and may have a red handle. To turn it off, rotate the handle clockwise.

## To Shut Off Water to Your Property

To turn off the water to your house and the rest of your property (including outdoor sprinkler systems, hose bibs, and so forth), look for the main valve just to the house side of your water meter. This is normally out by the street, often in a concrete box just below ground level.

Once you locate the valve handle, turn it clockwise until it stops. If it is frozen in position, put a few drops of lubricating oil around the valve stem and wear a work glove to turn the handle or, if necessary, turn it with the help of a pipe wrench.



The main water shutoff valve is usually located near the water meter. This should shut off water to your entire property. This valve should always be completely open or completely closed – never to control the amount of flow of water to the house.