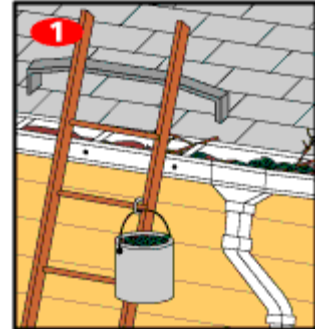


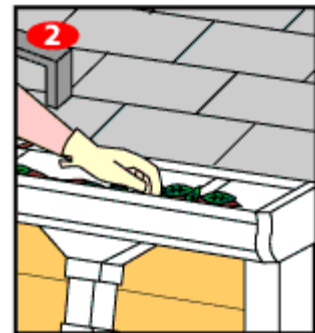
Introduction

Gutters are an important part of your home's [weatherproofing](#) system. For many homeowners, their gutter system is a secondary concern and often gets neglected. Don't make that mistake! It is important that you maintain a free-flowing gutter system as your gutters prevent rain from running from your roof and falling too close to your house. Flowing water away from your house properly will protect your foundation, keep stains from developing on your siding, and keep walkways ice-free in the wintertime.

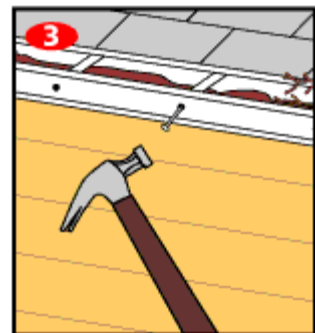
1. **Cleaning and Maintenance.** The most basic, but necessary maintenance you should do is cleaning your gutter system thoroughly. You should clean and repair your gutters twice a year – once in the spring and once in the fall. Begin by securely placing your ladder so that you can reach the gutters easily. Do not rest the ladder directly on the gutters, as you will damage them! You may be interested in gutter attachments that allow you to raise your ladder higher without damaging your gutters.



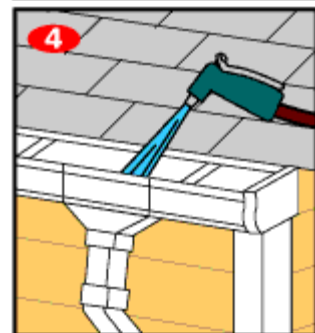
2. Using rubber gloves, manually clean out any debris that you can reach in the gutters. It is a good idea to throw the debris into a bucket or [garbage can](#) directly so that you do not make a mess around your home.



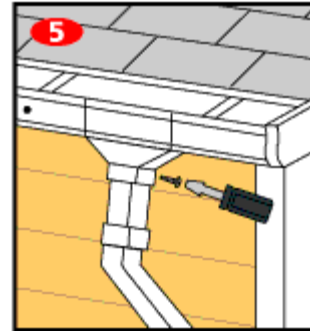
3. While you are cleaning, you should hammer or replace any [nails](#) that might have loosened.



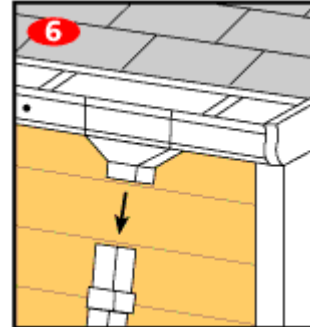
4. Use a [water hose](#) and spray down the gutters of any small debris. You should see the water flow out cleanly from the downspout.



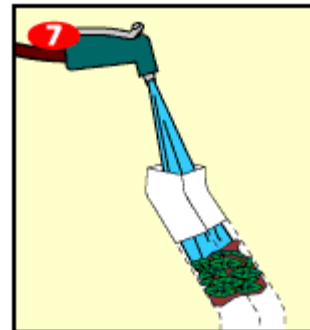
5. If the water does not flow out cleanly, or your downspout flows directly into a main drain, you should disassemble the downspout joint from the gutter. Remove any retaining screws and hardware from the joint.



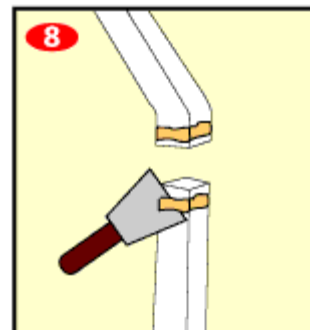
6. Pull the joint downward to remove it from the gutter.



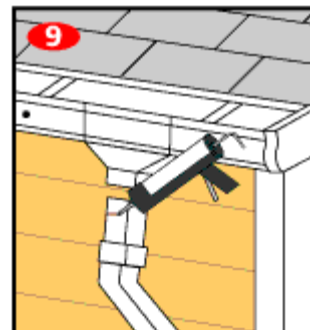
7. After removing the downspout, spray water through it until it flushes clean. You may have to use an auger if there are very stubborn clogs.



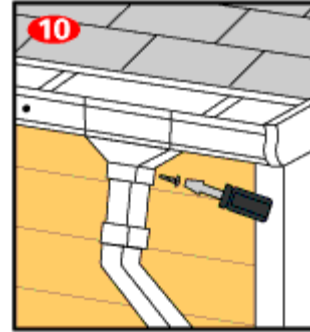
8. Before returning the downspout to the gutter, you will need to scrape off the adhesive from the hardware and inspect the downspout and the gutter to be sure that it is not damaged or dented.



9. Use a silicone sealant around the downspout attachment and slip the downspout back into place.



- 10 Remember to replace the retaining hardware so that the downspout is secure to the gutter.



- 11 After giving the sealant to dry, spray water down the gutter system to ensure that it is watertight and that the water flows out properly. If there are any damaged areas, move onto our Gutter Repair tutorial.

