

# THE FUMBLETONS

PRESENT:

50 HANDY DANDY  
EASY PEASY  
HOUSEHOLD FIX IT TIPS  
THAT WE CAN DO...  
AND YOU CAN TOO!





**50 HANDY DANDY EASY PEASY  
HOUSEHOLD FIX IT TIPS  
THAT WE CAN DO ...AND YOU CAN TOO!**

Your favorite dysfunctional family from the quirky YouTube series “The Fumbletons” bring you a book full of simple, little to no cost solutions around the house that anyone can do!

*Illustrated by Jess Erskine*

*Edited by Jim Erskine*

For more great tips and videos, please visit us at  
[TheFumbletons.com](http://TheFumbletons.com)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The tips presented in this volume were shared by a whole big bunch of our wonderful friends and readers, including:

Janet Albertson, Tamra, Kim Anderson, Mindy Capello, Terri Krauth, Anastacia Maness, Amy Parker, Connie Sawyer, Susan Whitehead, Ali, Kendra LaBouf, Paula R., Nicole Hale, Vicki H., Sarah Robertson, Viorica, Mrs. Seth Allen, Beth C., Kulani McDermott, Amy, Lesley Bambridge, Terry Allegood, Shaena, Lana D., Josie Johnson, Nancy Bearden, Cindy T, Handy Mom, Deb B., Irene Daniels, Shannon, Beth Cook, and dozens more!

Thanks everyone for sharing your wisdom and tips!

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## ***A BAR OF SOAP IS HANDY...***



For making diaper pins sharper – when they get dull, poke them in a soap bar.

When a zipper is not gliding smoothly, rub a bar of soap on it.

If drawers are not sliding well, remove and rub the underside with

either a cake of soap or a candle. They will then run smoothly again.

## ***FINDING STORAGE SPACE***

For extra under-bed storage purchase 4-6 inch stilts to put your bedframe on. That will give you enough storage space to put a plastic tub under the bed.

One space saving idea I have happened upon is storing my folded sheets between the mattress and the box spring of the bed they belong to. That way they are out of sight but easily accessible when needed. It frees up space in my very small linen closet.

For multiple bed sheet sets I put the sheets and pillow cases in 1 of the pillow cases and then put them in my chest. That way everything is where it needs to be.

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## ***SCUFFS, SCRATCHES & SHARPIES***



Use the sharpie for ANY thing that has a scuff or needs a fill in. Coats, yes, even leather, shoes, table, anything that is black (as long as you aren't coloring it ;o) can be touched up with a black sharpie....and I imagine if it was a match, you could use any color?

To cover a scratch on wood furniture, try rubbing the scratch with the inside of a raw walnut. The scratch just disappears and the wood is conditioned as well. We have used this to successfully "fix" our dining room table and also our daughter's cello!

If I get a bleach stain on clothing I use a Sharpie to make it look good again. If the color matches, great.....if not, we get creative and design a new shirt! I've also been known to Sharpie my shoes just for fun.

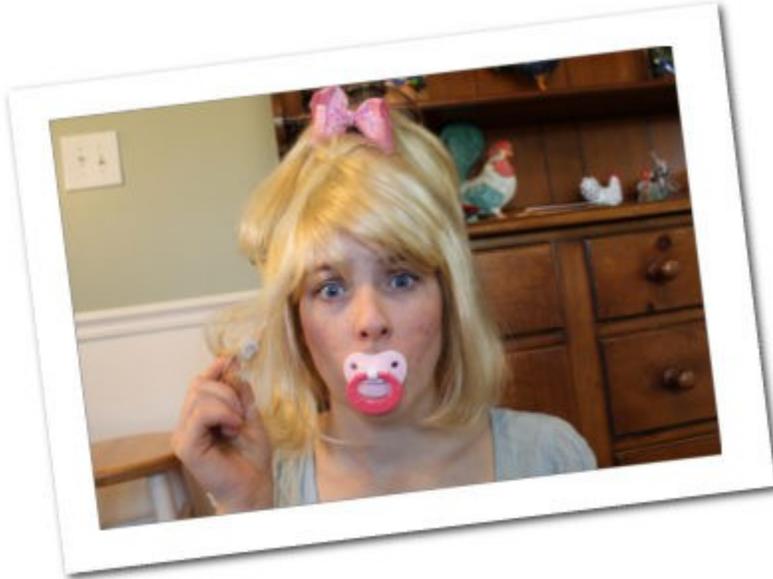
When my children use permanent marker on the dry erase board instead of dry erase marker, finger nail polish remover takes it right off.

To remove permanent market from a dry erase board, just go over the permanent marks

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with a dry erase marker, wait a few minutes, and wipe it off. It really works!

## ***HAIR DE-GUCKING***



You can get bubble gum out of long hair by rubbing peanut butter on it. When I was a girl my mom tried numerous things to get gum out of my hair. I now have 3 daughters and a friend shared that tip with me. It's messy but it has worked every time. Now when my daughter

gets gum in her hair she automatically brings me the peanut butter.

## ***STUCK & BROKEN LIGHT BULBS***

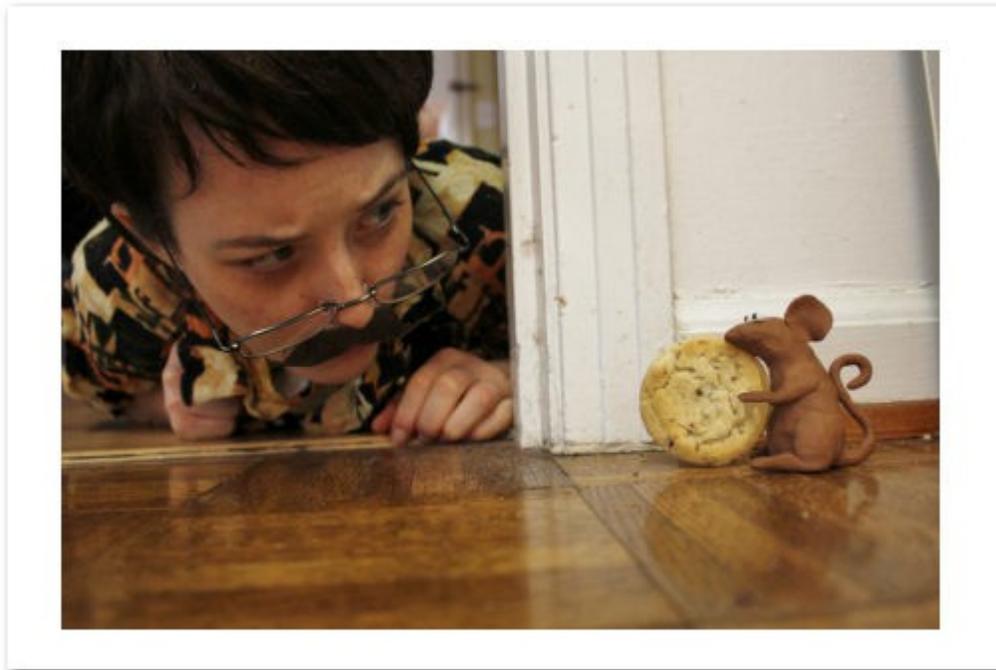
We use this one more than I am comfortable admitting. Simply, if you break a light bulb in the light fixture and need to remove it, here's how: Take a medium size potato, cut the end off at a size that will allow it to fit over the socket. Press the potato into the socket and begin to twist until you are able to unscrew and pull the light bulb from the socket. Throw in trash. Saves you the cost of an electrician, a trip to the ER, being cut etc.

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Having trouble removing burned-out light bulbs from canned or recessed light fixtures? Add a little duct tape to your fingertips and thumb to help you safely and quickly remove the bulb.

Always turn OFF the light switch when removing or screwing in a new bulb so you won't get shocked (the glass can conduct electricity – especially when you have sweaty hands).

## ***BUGS, MICE & OTHER PESTS***



When someone gets stung by a bee, wasp, or hornet, put a dab of household bleach on the sting site asap. I am allergic to bee stings, but if I got the bleach on the sting within a minute or two, there would be no swelling, redness, or pain.

My great aunt taught me that creams like Vicks Vapo Rub are EXCELLENT for taking

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the itch our of bug bites, even mosquitoes. Now, if someone accidentally stands in a bed of fire ants and gets bitten, the best remedy is to soak the feet in white vinegar. Takes the "fire" out of their bites like magic!

Bait a mousetrap with PEANUT BUTTER - it's very attracting and if it sits for a while, it doesn't spoil as quickly as cheese.

Diatomaceous Earth (also known as DE) can get rid of household pests naturally. This powder, sprinkled around the edges of the house, scratches off the insects' waxy coating and dehydrates them. It is an organic, inexpensive pest control that won't fill your house full of chemicals. The food grade DE is safe for human and pet consumption as well.

Peppermint oil on cotton balls will repel mice. Soak the cotton balls with peppermint oil and put where you want to keep mice out of.

Pesky spiders always building webs in door frames or in corners? Use furniture oil on the tops of the door frame and it will prevent the spider's web from sticking and won't be able to build a web! (Never use food oils - they will eventually grow rancid! ICK!)

Put cloves in spice bags and hang in closets instead of mothballs.

## ***CAYENNE YOU STOP THE BLEEDING?***

Cayenne pepper is excellent at stopping any bleeding wound (big or small). Just pour cayenne pepper on the bleeding wound and it will stop fairly quick. It does NOT sting or

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hurt. It helps with the healing. Speaking from personal experience, even if the wound is deep, it prevents the need for stitches. It heals nicely on its own.

Keep super glue in your first aid kit. You can use it to glue up cuts when you can't get in to the doctor. To get over the sting of paper cuts or box cuts, super glue your cut fingers and you can continue your project blood-free, and a speedier healing

## ***BANANA SPLIT YOUR DVDS***

If you have a scratched CD/ DVD you can fix it sometimes with this cleaning tip. Put your disc scratched side up on a clean, flat surface. Peel a banana. Rub the fruit all over the surface in a circular motion then rub the peel on it the same way. Do this applying pressure for a couple minutes. Then clean off with a cotton cloth and glass cleaner and dry completely. The waxy residue from the peel, along with the residue from the banana, clean and polish the disc.



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# ***TOILET TROUBLES***

The chain that comes with the plunger in the tank of your toilet is meant to get tangled up. That is the way they make them. Once yours gets rusty and starts to "hang" thus making your potty run forever and drive your water bill up, here's how to fix it once and for all! Cut the chain off and replace with fishing line. The braided kind is strongest but any fishing line will work. If you don't have any, ask a neighbor. If that doesn't work buy some from your local store and go ahead and ask for the braided kind. Fishing line is less likely to tangle and it doesn't rust. It will eventually need replacing, everything else does, but it won't cost nearly as much as a chain and if you keep that same spool of fishing line around, you will have it for the life of the toilet.

If you have a plugged toilet that no amount of plunging and waiting hours seems to help....then bail out the standing water in the toilet bowl. Pour a pot of very hot water with a large squirt of DAWN liquid dish soap into the toilet bowl. Put the plunger in the toilet with the hot water and soap, let it sit a few minutes, and then plunge. Chances are, your plug will be gone!

If you have a drain that drains slowly, dump some baking soda in the drain, and then slowly pour some heated vinegar on it. (If you heat the vinegar in your coffee maker, you can clean the coffee maker at the same time!) This will flush out whatever is clogging your drain. Repeat as needed.

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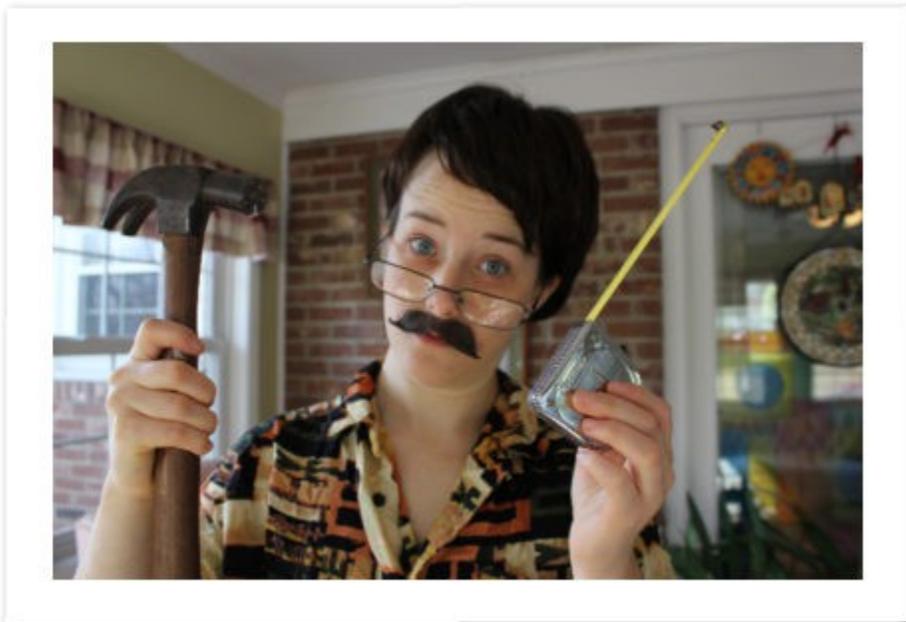
## ***DOOR DILEMMAS***

If you happen to have a screen door on one of your outside doors (i.e. back door) and it slams shut when the kids run in and out, you can put some clear silicone drops on the edging of it and let it dry and then it will help soften the door closing without hearing the bang.

To prevent doors from "sticking", rub/clean door frames and edges of doors with a fabric softener dryer sheet.

If your house doors are squeaking you can brush vegetable oil on them and they will stop.

## ***WALL HANGINGS AND HOLES IN THE WALL***



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To hang pictures that are not large, just use clear push pins. (the kind with a head) This leaves a much smaller hole & they usually bear the weight quite well.

Use white toothpaste to fill small nail holes in your wall. When it dries it will match the white wall and fill in the hole nicely. This works great when you are moving and need to fix any nail holes in the walls quickly.

Need help hanging pictures? Take a wooden ruler and run a screw through it at the 1 or 1 1/2 inch mark, so about half of the screw is on each side. Now you can hang the picture on the screw, while holding the ruler as a handle. Once you have the picture where you want it press on the ruler and the screw will mark your spot.

## ***LOOSE SCREWS***

When trying to loosen or tighten screws, remember it's 'Lefty loosie, Righty tighty" !

If a screw is stripped or loose and slipping because the hole is stripped out, you can stick a wooden matchstick (or a couple of toothpicks) in the hole, break them off flush with the face of the cabinet and screw the screw back in again. (add a smidge of wood glue before you stick in the sticks if you really, really want it to last!)

If you're having a hard time holding a nail or screw in a small space, poke the nail through a piece of paper or card stock and hold onto that instead.

Ever had a hard time screwing something into solid wood or a stud? Try scraping the

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screw across a damp bar of soap, until the threads of the screw are well-coated with soap. It will screw in MUCH easier.

## ***COOL HANDY MAN TIPS FOR ALL OVER THE HOUSE***

Repair a small ding in your windshield with a drop of superglue.

Do you need a quick and inexpensive way to cover your windows? Buy flannel-backed tablecloths and you can cut them to the size that you need. You can use a sewing machine to stitch a pocket for your rod or use curtain rod clip rings (clip the tablecloth, along the top and run your rod through the clips). You can find all sorts of patterns, at your favorite discount store and you can even change up your curtains to match the seasons!

We have a drawer in the kitchen we call the "Daddy Drawer". In it we can put any screws, nails or other things we find laying in the house, as well as anything that we need Daddy to fix. This way anything that requires his attention is easy for him to find when he has a minute or two to work on it.

To repair a broken flip-flop or to keep one from completely pulling through, take a flat, plastic bread fastener and slip it over the knob of the strap on the bottom of the shoe.

To get candle wax off of any clothing or out of old candles, just stick in the freezer. This will also work moderately well on chewing gum.

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To retrieve anything small (like an earring) that has fallen in a hard to reach place, Put pantyhose or other mesh-like material over your vacuum hose and suck up the object. It won't go through the hose, but it'll be picked up easily.

Keep your windowsills clean with a coat of regular floor wax. It's water resistant and dirt wipes right off.

Rug sliding on the hardwood floor? If you put a thin strip of silicon caulk on the back of a rug, let it dry, and then put the rug back down, it will stay put.

Preserve your manicure! Before doing a chore that makes your hands dirty (gardening, changing the oil in your car, etc.), scrape your nails over a bar of soap. Your hands will easily come clean afterward and you won't stain your nails.

I found that whenever I needed a screw, hammer, or drill it was sure to be in my husband's toolbox...at work! So I used some large margarine containers and began collecting my own small tools. Now I have pretty much everything I need for a quick fixing or hanging job in my laundry room.

Use the nitrogen-rich waste water from your fish aquarium to water your houseplants.

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# ***BE BRAVE, FEARLESS AND STRONG. YES, YOU CAN DO IT!***



So many times there is a problem, and everyone is scared to touch it. Be brave and step up and look at it and fix it. Have you ever taken a lamp apart? Try it, and then you'll be able to repair all the lamps in the house. Give a set of tools, such as screwdrivers and hammer, to each and every member of the family, and make sure they all

know how to use them, as well as when.

If something breaks don't be afraid to take it apart and see if it is something you can easily fix. Like the power button on our VCR broke off all I had to do was open it up and glue it back on. It also makes a great activity for the kids to see what the inside of our machines look like. Better than throwing it away and buying a new one.

So many DIY books are to be found in the library. We always do the research ourselves before calling in the "experts". Even if we can't fix the problem ourselves, at least we are able to make a more informed decision.

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Thanks for reading, and I hope you found a few tips that will save you a little household grief & frustration in the future! Come see me at “The Fumbletons” for more fun and cool tips!

– Jess Erskine, [TheFumbletons.com](http://TheFumbletons.com)

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