

The Best Toilet Paper for Your Plumbing

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We tested toilet paper breakdown and this is what happened.

Toilets clog for a number of reasons, but one reason few consider is the type of toilet paper they use. While all toilet paper dissolves eventually, the speed at which it breaks down is what matters. Slow dissolving toilet paper can get caught in your pipes and build up over time, creating a potential clog. If you have an old toilet, bad pipes, a septic tank, or a **kid who loves to watch toilet paper disappear down the toilet**, it's even more important you buy the right toilet paper to avoid disaster. So, to get to the bottom of this problem, I went to my local store, overloaded my cart with popular toilet paper brands and put them to the test. As you might imagine, I received several strange looks, but I didn't let that deter me; I was on a mission. Here are my results.

The Toilet Paper Test

Since I wanted to test **how fast toilet paper disintegrated in water**, I didn't consider other factors like the environment, cost, or comfort. I needed to find the toilet paper with the fastest break down. That's it. Thankfully, the process wasn't difficult; you could easily do it at home. I gathered up nine rolls of popular toilet paper brands and dropped two squares of each in water and let them sit for 15 minutes. Afterward, I stirred to simulate a single flush. Then I tried to scoop the shards out of the water. The toilet paper that barely hung on passed the test. The results were stunning and clear.

Bad

Quilted Northern Ultra Plush

It's no surprise a 3-ply toilet paper called "ultra plush" is the worst performer. It barely broke down, coming out of the water thick and almost fully intact. There's little doubt it would clog a toilet. Proceed with caution.

Cottonelle Ultra Comfort Care

Though it's a 2-ply, the Cottonelle Ultra Comfort Care performed poorly and came out looking, similar to Quilted Northern, long, clumpy, and intact. It would likely take a long time for this product to break down in your pipes.

Okay

Charmin Ultra Soft & Charmin Ultra Strong

Between these two similar products, Charmin Ultra Soft broke down just a little more than Ultra Strong. Of course, both did better than Quilted Northern Ultra Plus, but not by very much. A little kid could easily clog a toilet by using too much of this plush tissue.

EverSpring Recycled

Touting 100% recycled bath tissue, FSC Certification, and no chlorine bleach whitening or added dyes and fragrances, this 2-ply still didn't pass the test. It looked similar to Charmin Ultra Strong, coming out as one, long soggy sheet of paper.

Kirkland Signature Bath Tissue & Smartly

These two brands might save you money at the checkout counter but could cost you later. While they performed a little better than the aforementioned products, in a side by side comparison, they came out about even. They looked clumpy and hardly broken down.

Best

Angel Soft

Of the 2-ply options, Angel Soft performed the best, disintegrating into tiny little pieces. When I extracted it, the pieces were so dissolved, it was hard to scoop any of it out at all. It proved a decent option for someone who wanted a safe 2-ply roll.

Scott 1,000

The winner is Scott 1,000. This 1-ply toilet paper broke down considerably faster than all the others. By the end of the fifteen minutes, it was in shards and could hardly be scooped out. As an additional test against Quilted Northern Ultra Plush, I tested six squares against Quilted Northern's two squares and Scott 1,000 still performed better, showing that even if you use more of the 1-ply, you'll be better off than if you use a dense toilet paper.

1-Ply Toilet Paper vs. 3-Ply Toilet Paper

Toilet paper comes in 1, 2, and 3-ply versions. With 1-ply toilet paper, you might expect that people would simply use more of it and end up with the same clogging problems as thicker paper. But I found that 1-ply paper breaks down faster, even if more is used. For example, I tested three times as much Scott's 1,000 versus Quilted Northern Ultra Plush to see if it made any difference in break down. It didn't. More sheets of Scott's 1,000 still broke down faster than the equivalent of Quilted Northern Ultra Plush.

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