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To ensure our content is always up-to-date with current information, best practices, and professional advice, articles are routinely reviewed by industry experts with years of hands-on experience. Reviewed by on Jun 02, 2023 Your central air conditioner works by performing a complex form of heat transfer with the assistance of a chemical refrigerant. When your refrigerant level runs low, the heat transfer does not take place, and the unit, while remaining functional and blowing air, will not provide cold air. This is a sign that you should be recharging or refilling the air conditioner with freon for AC.Freon is a non-combustible gas that acts as a refrigerant. It's both a specific product and a common general phrase for a class of hydrocarbon products. These materials are mildly toxic. They can cause mild injuries if they contacted with skin, and serious damage if they're deeply inhaled, so always wear gloves and a mask when working with them.Before you start, research what kind of refrigerant your unit uses. There are different types, and recharging with the wrong one could cause problems much worse than simply not having a charged AC unit. Don't try this procedure with a window AC unit.While it is possible to acquire coolant and recharge the unit yourself by purchasing a commercial Freon kit, the rest of the functioning elements of air conditioners can seem dangerous and intimidating to an inexperienced person. If you do not feel comfortable with a project of this magnitude, its a good idea to call an air conditioning expert.DISCLAIMER: We recommend avoiding this type of project and using a professional since it can be hazardous if you're inexperienced. In some areas, it's illegal to use refrigerants or do this kind of work on air conditioning units without the proper license.Also complicating matters, Freon gas is dangerous when it enters the atmosphere so recovery of the old gas is important. For these reasons, it is necessary to have a professional recharge the air conditioner, but professionals mean spending money.You can, however, get certified with an EPA Section 609 certification, but you will also need to have the right equipment. Costs of Freon for ACThe cost is luckily not extreme, nor should your Freon need to be replaced on a regular basis. Between $100 and $150, you can get a refill which should last for many years. Usually, when a professional refills the Freon, he or she will also check to make sure the system is functioning properly.However, if the Freon needs to be refilled again in less than three years, you may have a leak within the hoses or valves which will need to be sealed. To get the best price on a Freon refill, check for sales during the cooler months when demand is not as high.There are some factors to consider that can either raise or lower the cost of a normal recharge. Companies charge by the pound for a Freon replacement, so the size of your unit and the level of your current refrigerant can skew this average up or down.For a small home, a large AC unit is unnecessary, and the smaller the unit, the less Freon it will need. But, on the other hand, with a large house comes a large air conditioning unit, and this will cost more to refill when it inevitably runs low.If your technician suspects a Freon leak, your costs will also go up; since the refrigerant is a regulated substance than can be harmful to the atmosphere, the EPA demands that a leak check be performed and any repairs made before the Freon can be refilled.Refrigerant recharges can also sometimes vary just based on location and time of year, but these factors shouldnt too dramatically affect the average cost.When to Add Freon for ACWhen you start a new season of air conditioning, you generally hope that the wall air conditioner is going to work just like it did last season. However, there are times when the air conditioner just doesn't seem to be working right. The issue could be Freon.In theory, freon should last basically forever, since it's just a medium for cooling, not a fuel that gets used up. The only time it should need replacing is when it's been seeping out of your system due to a leak.One of the first indications that the Freon in your wall air conditioner is starting to fall below acceptable levels is that it will begin to lose its cooling power. The air will not seem to be as cold as it usually is.Another indication that the Freon is getting low is when the wall air conditioner does not get rid of the humidity like it did previously. You will feel sticky from the heat and the moisture in the air. You may even begin to smell something sweet.Some of these signs are also indications of other problems within the air conditioner, such as a dirty air filter. When the air filter is clogged, or full of dirt, the air will not get through to the cooling coils.This is why it is important to regularly clean your air conditioning unit. Spending a few minutes cleaning it will save you a lot of issues in the long run and will make it clearer what the problem is if issues do arise.Step 1 - Inspect the UnitUsing your air conditioners manual, locate the compressor of your unit. It will look like a metal cylinder and have two lines coming off it.TIP: Before adding the coolant, use this opportunity to inspect the rest of the components and make sure they are clean and working. There are two reasons this is necessary:1) it may be something other than the refrigerant that is impacting the units performance.and 2) if fresh refrigerant is added and the unit is powered on while another component isnt functioning optimally, all kinds of general damage could occur far beyond a coolant or charging issue.Even when its clear something is wrong, the only way to be 100% sure that there is a leak is to do a complete inspection and actually locate a physical leak.Freon has a slight sweet smell, bordering on the sickly scent of chloroform. It's not flammable, but it's dangerous to breathe in, so make sure your mask is on while you're sniffing around.Attach a temperature gauge to your valves and wait approximately five minutes to get an accurate reading. Do your research to determine what an adequate reading would be for your unit model, but anything in the 45 degrees Fahrenheit range generally means your coolant levels are sufficient.If it's above that number, or the number designated in your manual, you may have low coolant levels. Refrigerant doesn't evaporate, so if your AC does not have a sufficient amount, it is because there is a leak.To locate the source of your Freon leak, you'll need to connect gauges to your AC lines in order to detect any low-pressure issues. If youre using a Freon kit, the instructions should clearly spell out what gauges and what lines attach where.If the low side pressure is below 65psi, you most likely have a leak. You can also look for visible signs of leaks along pressure lines and joint connections. Occasionally dyes are added to coolants so that you can visibly see color where a leak is happening. Once your find the source of the leak, you can start the air conditioner repair process.Step 2 - Purchase Necessary SuppliesThe first thing you need to do is find out what type of Freon youll need for your air conditioner. If your unit was built prior to 2010, it's likely going to use R-22. To be sure, you can check the unit itself for a label that specifies which type of coolant to add.The newer systems dont use refrigerant, so make sure to check your unit before deciding whether a leak is the cause of inefficient cooling.If youre certain a leak is the problem, you should purchase a Freon repair kit. These kits are excellent for HVAC beginners and generally come with a reusable injection hose, an AC sealant, and most importantly, a detailed set of instructions. Otherwise, you can choose to buy these items separately in addition to your pressure and temperature gauges.Step 3 - Turn Off Your SystemTurn off your air conditioner and temporarily turn off the circuits that send power to it. If you are committed to doing any internal air conditioner repair, having any electricity running through the system, even if its not turned on at that moment is dangerous.Step 4 - Protect YourselfPut on your goggles, gloves, and a breathing mask. While a substance like Freon is more toxic to the environment than it is to humans, to humans, it is still important to protect yourself thoroughly.Step 5 - Plug the Service ValveLocate the service valve inside your Freon kit. It will be the large connector valve found amongst the kits other contents. Plug the service valve into a compressor line (one of the lines you located next to the compressor earlier) in your air conditioner unit. Follow the Freon kit instructions to attach the service valve appropriately.Step 6 - Plug the Tap ValveYour Freon kit also contains a small valve connector. That valve is called the tap valve. The tap valve must be plugged into the remaining compressor line to your AC compressor.You will find fittings on top of your air conditioners compressor. Follow the instructions in the Freon kits manual for the best results or if there is any confusion.Step 7 - Add FreonTo add Freon to the lines, you need to attach the Freon container to the two valves that you have just installed. Follow the instructions set in your Freon kit to secure the container between the two valves. Basically, the air conditioner will force the Freon into the unit.Step 8 - Charge FreonNow that youve finished installing new refrigerant to your home AC unit, you need to let the Freon flow into it. To do so, simply turn on the unit and turn it up to the highest setting. This will force Freon into your unit, effectively recharging your air conditioner in the process.Once the unit is done taking in all of the Freon, turn off the air conditioning unit. Remove the Freon container and the two valves that you installed.Step 9 - Test the SystemIf you believe youve added the proper amount, something that is much easier to determine by using your gauges, let the system circulate for 15-20 minutes as a test run. If all signs indicate that your air conditioner is properly cooling, you can detach your gauges and hoses.If your AC is still not cooling off, you either need more Freon, or you still have a leak and need to call an HVAC specialist for further investigation.Cleaning Your AC Unit is ImportantMany people will neglect the cleaning of their wall air conditioner because of the hassle of taking it out of the wall housing. However, if this is not done, you might be getting rid of a perfectly good air conditioner. The problems that are associated with the loss of Freon are also similar to those of a dirty AC.Clean your wall air conditioner every spring to keep from buying replacement parts, expensive equipment, or a brand new air conditioner. If the unit is clean, you have taken good care of it, and it is more than ten years old, then have it checked by a certified technician to replace the Freon.Set a Maintenance ScheduleA central air conditioner shouldn't need to be recharged every year. However, yearly maintenance and inspection of your unit is a good idea. This will save you from being without air conditioning during the hot summer months if something goes wrong.The inspection should include a report that details how well the unit is working, how much refrigerant is remaining, and any problem areas that may need attention.The reality is, an air conditioner unit that's functioning perfectly should never need to be recharged. If the refrigerant level is decreasing, it's because there is a leak somewhere in the system that needs to be repaired.If a technician suggests just recharging the system, you are leaving yourself open to more problems down the road. If money is an issue, having your unit recharged may help you make it through the summer, but the leak will eventually need to be addressed.It's best to have the system checked for leaks every few years. This doesn't have to be part of a yearly maintenance schedule, but it's not a bad idea either.For more on staying cool, check out our pieces on changing AC filters and removing bad odors from your cooling unit.Refill Freon in Your Home AC Unit FAQCan I put Freon in my home air conditioner myself?Filling an air conditioner with Freon may seem like a simple enough matter but if you are in the U.S., it is illegal for you to handle Freon. For both human health and environmental safety reasons, only EPA-licensed technicians are allowed to handle Freon.How often should you refill Freon in your home air conditioner?Unless there is a leak, the Freon in your home AC should last for years before it needs to be refilled. Most AC units need new Freon once every two to five years, on average.How do I know if my home AC needs Freon?If your air conditioner needs Freon, you will notice that the air blowing in your home is no longer providing enough cooling. You may even find that the air blowing out from the vents is warm.Inspect the refrigerant line. When the Freon is low, you may see a buildup of ice on the line and/or hear a hissing noise in the line.How much does it cost to put Freon in a home AC unit?Depending on the size of your air conditioner, most homeowners pay around $200 to $400 to have Freon refilled. If you have a larger air conditioner, you may pay $600 or more.Should you run AC when low on Freon?The air conditioner can still blow air and sometimes that air may even feel somewhat cooler than warm when the Freon levels are low, but you should not attempt to run the unit while it's low on coolant.The AC is specifically designed to function with a certain amount of Freon, which provides necessary lubricant, so you can cause damage to the air conditioner if you run it while it doesn't have enough Freon to provide cooling airflow. Professional Advice. Interior and Exterior Home Construction, Building Plans, Design, CAD and 3D Home Design Programs. Green Building Construction, Materials and Methods. Are construction quotes... by Zorfdt 04-11-25 09:51 AM 377 1,670 (4 Viewing) Professional Advice. Homes, Buildings, Structural Styles, Constructions and Designs. Load bearing wall ? with pics by sethlit 07-19-24 08:07 PM 375 2,108 (7 Viewing) Selections, styles, types, measuring, installations, maintenance and repairs. Window covering advice for... by avilardosimonis 07-15-25 12:12 AM 656 2,709 (4 Viewing) Professional Advice. General color selection & coordination, furniture arrangement & overall home decor. 1,502 5,805 (3 Viewing) Fabric selection, measuring, installation, maintenance and repair of pinch pleats, rod pockets, tab tops, tiebacks, sheers, curtains, cornice boxes, swags, cascades, valances and scarves. Curtain Bracket?? by Shadeladie 04-17-24 06:49 AM 373 1,734 (5 Viewing) Selecting fabrics, repairing and upholstering fabrics, leather or vinyl furniture and Decor. Dog poop on "W" clean code... by NittanyLion1973 05-23-25 02:46 PM 358 1,401 (5 Viewing) Professional Advice. Decorative painting techniques for walls, ceilings & furnishings, Faux textures, Venetian plaster, stenciling, murals, & special effects. what texture is this? by tightcoat 03-06-21 02:10 PM 343 1,365 (16 Viewing) Professional Advice. Bedroom, Dining Room, Home Entertainment, Home Office, Kitchen & Living Room any ideas on how to prevent a... by Shadeladie 03-10-25 06:19 AM 898 2,878 (4 Viewing) Professional Advice. Selection, cutting, framing, installation, measuring, repairing, tinting and removal. Can I replace single pane... by XSleeper 06-04-25 06:58 AM 468 1,894 Professional Advice. Selection & placement of wall decors, lamps, area rugs, housewares & accent items. Hanging decor in stairwell by PJmax 02-04-24 06:19 PM 279 937 (54 Viewing) All Surfaces Painting & Staining. Product selections, surface preparations, tools, applications, techniques, problem solutions & cleaning up methods. Painting exterior foundation by marksr 07-04-25 02:09 AM 9,488 41,863 (2 Viewing) Professional Advice. Selection, all interior coverings, surface preparation, installation, tools, techniques, repair & removal. Looking For This Wallpaper by PJmax 03-04-25 11:14 PM 1,003 3,338 To ensure our content is always up-to-date with current information, best practices, and professional advice, articles are routinely reviewed by industry experts with years of hands-on experience. Reviewed by on Jun 26, 2023 Vinyl or tarp Strong scissors Waterproof epoxy Metal strips Strong magnets Tape measure Permanent marker Drill Masonry hole bit Mallet Vinyl or tarp Strong scissors Waterproof epoxy Metal strips Strong magnets Tape measure Permanent marker Drill Masonry hole bit Mallet Inground pool covers are meant to prevent debris from entering the pool. Instead of buying inground pool covers, you can make them yourself. This article will show you how.Step 1 - Measure and CutInground pool covers are rectangular so there is no need to cut them for the shape of your pool. You will only need basic measurements. Use your tape measure to record the length of the pool at its longest point and the width of the inground pool at its widest point. This will give you the general measurement that you will use when making the pool cover. Transfer these measurements to the material you selected to use. Only draw the measurements on the side you plan to not have facing up. Include an extra 1-inch in the measurements to create a clean hem. Once the measurements have been recorded you can cut the material.In order to make the inground pool covers look nicer, hems are added to create a nice line to the finished product. For this project, the hem will have another function as a way to fasten the pool cover to the pool. You will want to place the metal strips along each edge of the pool cover. The only bare spots will be at the extreme corners. The metal strips should be somewhat flexible and about an inch wide. Start with one edge and fold it over. This will push the metal strip toward the center of the material. Make the fold about an inch then let the material go and it will go back to normal but the metal strip will remain positioned. Use the marine grade epoxy and create a line along the edge of the material. Pull the edge over again but by 1-inch to cover and pass over the metal strip. Press the edge down and hold it firmly in place. The epoxy will set quickly creating the hem. Repeat for each edge of the pool cover.Step 3 - FastenIn order for inground pool covers to be effective, they need to cover the pool and stay in place. This is what the magnets are for as they work even if they get wet. Spread the pool cover over the pool and weight it down once it is evenly spaced. Use a pencil and draw a simple line along the outer edge. The metal strip will be very close to this edge and will serve as a guide. Use round magnets that are slightly larger than the width of the metal and choose a drill bit that is identical to the size of the magnets. Every foot along the edge make a hole that is exactly the same depth as the magnets are thick. Use a mallet to push the magnets inside the holes. The inground pool covers will latch on to the magnets to create a seamless connection. To ensure our content is always up-to-date with current information, best practices, and professional advice, articles are routinely reviewed by industry experts with years of hands-on experience. Reviewed by on Jul 31, 2023 While your first instinct might be to kill bees with harsh chemicals, you can keep them away from your home in more natural ways. These tactics are better for bees themselves as well as for the environment, and often your wallet as well.After all, we may not want them as house guests, but we still need honey bees to pollinate local flowers and continue the growth cycle of many plants. Killing them can hurt the flowers and other plant life in your area.You can create a home that bees, hornets, and wasps alike will hate by following these simple steps to repel them from your area in a safe manner.1. Mix Soap and WaterHomemade bee repellent doesnt have the same harshness as commercial, chemical repellents since almost all household soaps are intended for safe household use. Unlike powerful insecticides, soaps dont have chemical compounds that can break through the living tissue of bees or the compacted material found in beehives.Instead, a soapy solution will work by attacking bees in two different ways using the same basic principle. When a soapy solution adheres to a bee, it alters the strength of the bees body surface.The insects natural waxy coating becomes heavier, reducing the bees ability to navigate through the air. The added surface area also absorbs more moisture, and this increasing weight constricts the bees ability to breathe.When sprayed upon beehives, the soapy mix forms a sticky coating that cuts off the air supply to the entire hive. This suffocates multiple bees at once, eventually killing them.Additionally, unlike most chemical bee repellents and sprays, soapy solutions dont leave a heavy reside. Whatever minimal coating is left behind can be easily wiped off or comes off naturally over time with a little water.To use soap and water, start by gathering your soap of choice, water, and a spray bottle. In an empty spray bottle, combine a few teaspoons of liquid dishwashing soap with the water.This will create a sticky, soapy mixture that you can safely spray on anything. Add more or less soap depending on the brand that you use, how sticky youd like your homemade bee repellent to be, and what youre spraying it on.For indoor applications, you should use more water and less soap so that you dont ruin furniture or create a particularly pungent environment. While this may not be the worst smell in the world, it is not desirable when it can be so easily avoided.For plants and outdoor areas, use more soap and less water so that the spray wont easily wash away due to natural moisture in the air or when it rains.2. Add Peppermint OilMany bugs, including hornets, hate the smell of peppermint oil, while to most humans, it is a great smell reminiscent of the holidays. While peppermint plants are just as susceptible to bee adoration as any plant, the distilled oils are another story.Get some peppermint essential oil from your local health food store, and after the soapy water is mixed together, you could put a few drops of the peppermint essential oil into the sticky soap solution.Make sure you add enough peppermint oil to your homemade bee repellent so that you can smell it when you spray. This is optional but is a great step to consider as it offers added protection against bees and will make the solution smell better than it would without the peppermint oil added.TIP: Peppermint oil can also be dabbed on rags or tissues and stashed around the house as a natural indoor repellent.While peppermint oil is safe to apply to most furniture, floors, and skirting, by using something removable like tissues, you can make a change if you ever get sick of the whole house smelling like candy canes.3. Add Some SpiceTo really ensure that the bees hate your mixture, you could also add 1/8 teaspoon of cinnamon to your sticky mint spray and 1/8 teaspoon of cayenne pepper. Again, this is optional but will improve the potency of your solution and how well it will work to get rid of the bees you are hoping to use it to get rid of.Hornets, bees, and wasps hate the scent of cinnamon and spice, so with the help of these two ingredients, your mixture should be strong enough to make pesky bees buzz away.These are also both ingredients most people will have lying around their homes anyway and are inexpensive, making them an easy way to help with your mission of getting rid of bees.4. Spray AwayYou have now added all the ingredients you will need to your spray bottle. Give it a good mix and it is now time to get to work. If youre dealing with pests buzzing around your home, this new homemade bee repellent should do the trick. While you can spray directly at the insects, your best bet is to prevent them from entering your home in the first place.For indoor issues, spray your mixture on windowsills and door frames to prevent pests from entering your home again. If your problem is mainly outside the home, try to find surfaces that wont be damaged or made unusable by the mixture. For example, you could spray the mix on the underside of lawn chairs, underneath tables, and on sidewalks.The water from your homemade bee repellent will evaporate, but the peppermint, cinnamon, and cayenne smells will be left behind to deter insects from spending time in the areas, and the sticky soap left behind will stick to them and fight them off meaning this mixture will work for long after you finish seeing or even smelling it.Other MethodsBees do their part for nature and the garden, but they can cause trouble at home. They present a threat to small children and those allergic to their sting, so unfortunately, not all families can keep them around.However, learning how to get rid of bees is not as difficult as you might think. There are several ways to keep bees at bay so you can enjoy your backyard and your home environment without getting stung.Here are a few simple and safe ways to keep the bees away from your home, patio and other outdoor areas, and hopefully from stinging you and your family.Call a BeekeeperBees are very important to our ecosystem and are in trouble worldwide, so before resorting to options that harm or kill them, try to see if there is a local beekeeper in your area.Beekeepers make a living making honey and giving bees a safe home, so they would likely love to have the nest and will know a safe way to remove it without harming the bees or your home and garden. This is a win-win solution as it helps the bees, the beekeeper, and you out.In the event that there is no beekeeper in your area to contact and the bees are presenting a safety hazard to you and your family, other natural methods can help.Spray Vinegar MixYou can also get rid of bees using vinegar. To do so, mix a half-part vinegar and a half-part water in a spray bottle. Spray the bee nest at night when the bees are not buzzing around or are mostly dormant.When you do this, wear protective clothing such as gloves, long pants, and a long-sleeve shirt, and maybe even netting tossed over a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and neck from being stung.Also, make sure to spray the solution on the areas where the bees are congregating, such as flower beds, plants, and bushes, and not just the nest itself. The next day, check for any activity in or near the nest. If you still see activity, spray again. Sweep up any dead bees from the area and discard them accordingly once the vinegar does its job.More Organic WaysIf you want to remove the bees organically, try mixing a solution of half water and half mild soap detergent into a spray bottle. Spray the nest and other affected areas with the solution in the evening.Soda PopYou can also get rid of bees using pop. To do so, cut an old soda bottle in half and fill it with a sweet soda like Mountain Dew and place it near the nest or on the ground in your garden, patio, or porch. The bees will become attracted to the scent, make their way toward it, and eventually drown in the solution. At this point, they will be unable to move and eventually die.ZapperPlace or hang a bug zapper strip near the hive. The bees will get caught in the sticky material and eventually perish. These can be purchased at any grocery, home improvement, or drug store. While effective, these often aren't the nicest to look at so many will go with a different method of bee removal first.Plants that Deter BeesIf your area is prone to swarms of bees, hornets, and wasps, in addition to mixing up a repellent, you may want to take stock of your garden and its plants.You may be growing sweet-scented flowers and plants that are attracting the bees, and if thats the case any kind of repelling attempt is going to be an uphill battle. If this is the case, you may want to relocate the plants instead so that they are further away from your home and so that the bees will not bother you.There aren't many flowers and plants that deter bees for the simple reason that plants need bees to pollinate them. However, wormwood (Artemis), eucalyptus, citronella, and peppermint are reputed to be natural bee and wasp repellents. You could plant these around your garden in order to reduce the bee population in your garden naturally.Deet-Free Insect RepellentMany synthetic insect repellents contain DEET (Chemical name: N, N Diethyl-Meta-Toluamide) which is a corrosive chemical that can dissolve plastic, nylon, and even paint.The good thing is that there are now more natural and healthy insect repellants to repel insects from you while you are in the great outdoors or even while you are inside your home. We found this Repel and this Herbal Armor options on Amazon.DisclaimerSpray your surfaces, not the pests themselves. While you can spray directly at the insects, any direct interaction or agitation like that can cause you to get stung.Remember that your mixture repels and doesnt kill, so if you walk up to a bee and spray something it hates directly at it, the bee or wasp may get angry and come after you before it decides to vacate the garden.Wasps in particular are known for their aggression. Never spray your homemade repellent directly at any wasps you see. If your yard is plagued by wasps that are especially numerous or aggressive, contact your local pest control office for professional intervention.ConclusionBy following one of the above-mentioned methods, you will be able to get rid of your bee problem. Make sure to be careful when you do so. For example, you may want to wear a long-sleeved shirt in case any angry bees fly out of the nest you are trying to get rid of.If you have concerns about your ability to relocate or get rid of the bees, call in the professionals. You can call a pesticide company that will come out and remove the hive from the area and spray the bees; many companies now use organic materials versus pesticides.Make sure to ask what methods they use to remove the bees before you decide which bee removal specialist to use for the task.Homemade Bee Repellent FAQWhat keeps bees away naturally?Certain plants naturally repel bees and make areas of your property feel very inhospitable to them. Bees do not like mint or citronella plants because of the natural scents these plants release.What is a natural repellent for bees and wasps?There are several smells that will repel bees when they are concentrated in oil form. Clover, peppermint, geranium, and lemongrass are all effective at repelling bees and wasps.What smell do bees hate the most?Bees seem to dislike the smell of peppermint above all others, though any plant in the mint family does work as a natural repellent for bees.What scent calms bees down?Smoke is used to calm bees down. Lavender smoke is said to be highly effective, as long as you don't use too much.What smell makes bees aggressive?The natural scent of bananas makes bees more aggressive, though they may also react to citrus smells and other scents that are repulsive to them with anger. To ensure our content is always up-to-date with current information, best practices, and professional advice, articles are routinely reviewed by industry experts with years of hands-on experience. Reviewed by on Aug 01, 2023 So your drain is clogged and you know the plumber lives for this kind of easy money, but you dont have a drain snake. No worries; a few household items can have your drains running free and keep your cash in your pocket.A Steel Coat HangerUse pliers to remove the hook portion and the twisted knot of metal just under it, then straighten the remaining steel wire. A coat hanger snagged in the drain is a larger problem than a clog, so leave the business end straight. Form a Z shape at the hangers end, then crank it as you push it into the drain.A steel cable with vinyl covering will work for medium distances; twist as you push it into the drain. Be certain to clean it well after use, as the household drain is a nasty place.Steel CableCheck your garage for steel cable of 1/8 or greater thickness. Using needle-nose pliers, shape individual wires at the end to resemble a daisy in bloom. Twist as you push the wire daisy into the drain.Dont Buy These ItemsIf these ideas arent within reach, check out your local hardware store. Some DIY drain snakes are less than 20 bucks. Its a good investment.How to Make Your Own Drain Snake FAQWhat can I use if I don't have a drain snake?If you don't have a snake, you can always try pouring boiling water down the drain. The hot water will not damage the pipes and it may be enough to dissolve and dislodge the clog that is causing all the trouble.Can I snake a drain myself?Most household clogs can be treated as a DIY project and snaked out by homeowners, so you don't have to spend the money to have a plumber fix the problem. However, there may be some clogs that are actually part of a larger plumbing problem or that prove to be so stubborn, you have no choice but to call in professional help.Why you should never use baking soda and vinegar to unclog a drain?Baking soda and vinegar are a common combination and a go-to household cleaning solution. This is a very effective solution for cleaning a drain and it can remove bad odors.Some say that the natural chemical reaction that occurs between vinegar and baking soda can dissolve clogs as well. Trying this mixture will not harm pipes but may not always prove effective at treating sink clogs.Can snaking a drain break a pipe?Over time, pipes can wear out, rust and become damaged. This makes it easier to pole holes in pipes, which can happen if you are attempting to snake out a drain.Snakes can create holes and damage in older pipes that are already wearing out. However, these pipes are clearly in need of replacing anyway.How do you unclog a drain when a snake won't work?Smoke clogs might be very tightly packed in there and even a snake cannot move them. In these cases, try renting a power auger to give yourself more force.You may also want to consider hiring a plumber at this time. How to Make a Gas BBQ Hotter By Luci Small If turning the knob is not helping to increase in the heat on your grill, give these tips a try. Can Solar Hot Water Heat a Jacuzzi? By Jen S. Soothe achy muscles and your pocketbook. 6 Tips for Removing a Home Security System By Sage C. You don't have to damage any circuits or wiring to remove your home security system. How to Trim Branches Before a Storm By Sara LeDuc Avoid a yard full of branches, or a hole in your roof. To ensure our content is always up-to-date with current information, best practices, and professional advice, articles are routinely reviewed by industry experts with years of hands-on experience. Reviewed by on Aug 11, 2023 Sometimes concrete tilts or sinks, even as soon as five years after being installed. As a result, concrete lifting is required to fix the problem. Luckily it is possible to do this yourself.Understanding Why the Concrete SankBefore beginning any concrete lifting yourself, it is important to understand why the concrete has sunk in the first place to make sure the sinking doesn't happen again. In most cases, the concrete has sunk because the dirt that was placed underneath it was not properly compacted during installation. Areas where this happens the most are on a driveway, a sidewalk, or a garage slab.Someone more skilled can use this method. Drill 2-inch holes into the sunken concrete and pour a mixture of fly ash, sand, water, and cement into the holes with a pump that produces 50 to 100 pounds of pressure. The mixture, which is like thick mortar, easily raises the sunken slab. Not much pressure is required to do this since concrete slabs don't weight too much. The average 4-inch thick concrete slab only weighs 1/3 of a pound per square inch.A Good Solution for DIYersSand also has air in it, but it may be a better option for the do-it-yourselfer trying to raise concrete. If it is done correctly. Smaller sections of sunken concrete can be cut out using a wet saw and then lifted out with a crowbar. Fill in the holes with sand and compact it with a tamping machine before replacing the sunken section. Pea gravel can sometimes be used instead of or even in conjunction with sand which fills in the spaces between the pea gravel.Concrete Lifting with a Small Sledge Hammer, Brick Chisel, and DrillThis is another method for doing it yourself. Use the brick chisel and sledgehammer to undercut any edges of the sunken concrete as necessary. With a concrete drill or masonry bit, drill small holes into the sunken area and slowly pour a thin mixture of cement into the holes. Allow it to stand for half an hour so that it can settle. Pour more cement if necessary. and allow it to settle. Smooth the surface with a trowel and let the concrete cure for 24 to 48 hours.Lifting Larger Areas of ConcreteTo lift larger areas of concrete, you'll need help. Begin by removing any cracked pieces. Clean the area with water from a hose, and then build a wooden form a couple of inches higher than the existing sunken concrete so that it matches the height of the concrete that hasn't sunk. Fill any holes with tamped sand. Lay the new concrete and finish it with a trowel.Replacing the Shifted or Non-compacted Dirt YourselfAs mentioned earlier in this article, concrete usually tilts or sinks because the uncompacted dirt underneath it has shifted, and is no longer providing a solid base for the concrete slab. The logical solution for the do-it-yourselfer is to dig a hole alongside the sunken slabs and shovel dirt into the hole. This will not successfully lift the concrete because there's too much air in the dirt. As the dirt gets moved, more air space is placed around each dirt particle making it fluffier, even though it doesn't look that way. The freshly installed dirt may temporarily raise the sunken concrete, but over time the concrete will shift again as the air leaves the soil and it settles back down again. Lifting concrete is a task that is every bit as difficult as it sounds. This is a real engineering project that needs a hydraulic pump and a special mixture that is injected under the concrete and into holes drilled into the concrete.It is difficult to do concrete lifting and that's why this is considered to be a task for professionals, but serious DIYers who are motivated can complete this project.Can I do my own mud jacking?Mud jacking is a type of concrete lifting that requires various tools, equipment, and materials. It is a complicated project and it does take a lot of work and many steps to complete, but it is not outside the realm of possibility for the serious DIYer.What is the cheapest way to lift concrete?DIYers say that polyurethane concrete lifting is not just a highly affordable option, it is also quicker to complete than other concrete lifting methods.What foam lifts concrete?Polyurethane foam is the preferred foam in concrete lifting projects where foam will be used. This is a smart choice for this type of task because foam expands to lift the foam.How long does foam lifting concrete last?Polyurethane foam dries to become very solid and will last indefinitely. It adheres to the concrete, sets up quickly, and until something disturbs it, the foam will stay where it was placed.If your home isnt equipped with traditional air conditioning, its time to look into homemade cooling that can lower the temps a notch while saving you a bundle of money. Take advantage of inexpensive, or even free, cooling whenever you can.DIY air conditioners follow the same concept as the standard window unit, portable AC, split design, and central airsend air through some form of coolant and deliver it into the room.Standard AC units can be expensive, cumbersome, and difficult to find when a heat wave strikes.The good news is that a makeshift air conditioner can be made from an assortment of materialsmany of which you likely have around the house already.In fact, you can score some free cooling with a bit of resourcefulness and a few supplies.1. Styrofoam Cooler ACIf you're wondering what to do with that styrofoam cooler the last meat delivery came in, use it to create an air conditioner.The concept here is very simple. First, youll equip the cooler with air and venting. Then youll fill it with ice and chill out.Step 1 - Pick a FanYou can use just about any size fan that will fit the top of the cooler. Consider battery powered or use a plug-in version.Use any type of manual or power saw that will cut a hole the size of the fan youre using. Think reciprocating saw, jigsaw, coping saw, razor, handsaw, or drywall blade.Make the hole slightly smaller than the size of the fans face.Place the fan face down into the hole and secure it into place if necessary.Step 3 - Make an ExhaustForage in your garage for something that will work as an exhaust pipe. It can be metal, or you can use PVC pipe elbows or dryer vent corners. You can even use toilet paper rolls in a pinch.Near the other end of the lid, cut one hole in each corner, each the size of the exhaust pipe. Then insert the elbows into the holes so they fit snugly.Turn the fan on and test that the air is flowing out of each pipe.Step 4 - Fill CoolerFor this project, ice is your coolant. Fill the cooler with ice, or even better, freeze water in water bottles and milk jugs before placing them in the cooler. Turn on the fan and position your cooler near your seat to enjoy.2. Copper Tubing CoolerCopper tubing is a fantastic temperature conductor. The idea of this design is to pump water through the copper tubing and blow the resulting cool air into the roomand it doesnt require any electrical work.Step 1 - Collect SuppliesFor this air conditioner, youll need a container or cooler, a small aquarium, pond, or fountain pump, a standard box fan, copper tubing, clear tubing, hose clamps, zip ties, and a few tools and pieces of hardware.Step 2 - Attach Copper to FanRemove the fans faceplate. Place it on a work surface. Lay the coiled copper tubing on the faceplate. Then slightly spread apart the copper tubing without kinking it anywhere.Secure the copper tubing to the faceplate with zip ties. Then trim the extra sections of the zip ties. Remount the faceplate to the fan. Turn on the fan to make sure it functions properly with the copper tubing on the front.Step 3 - Place the PumpThe pump will move water into the clear tubing and then through the copper tubing. To do this, mount the pump to the inside bottom of the cooler. Cut a small notch out of the cooler to provide a space for the pumps cord to exit.Step 4 - Install Plastic TubingNext, youll attach the proper size of plastic tubing to the pump. Drill holes in the lid of the cooler and feed the other end of the clear hose through them.Step 5 - Secure the FanPlace the fan onto the lid of the cooler. Then mount it to the cooler with screws through the feet of the fan. This is to stabilize the fan and add height. If you prefer, you can use longer hoses and keep the fan off to the side of the cooler.Step 6 - Attach the Other End of the Clear TubingNow slide the ends of the clear tubing over the ends of the copper tubing. Secure both ends with hose clamps.Step 7 - Fill with Water and IceFinally, place enough water in the cooler to completely cover the pump. To make the water colder, add ice to the cooler. Even better, use frozen milk jugs filled with water. They last longer than ice and can be reused without waste.If everything is working right, the pump should send cold water through the clear tubing and into the copper tubing. The fan then blows through the cold copper, providing a chilling breeze.If you have any air leaks around the clear tubing or the cord hold, apply a sealant.3. Container ACBefore ditching that half-gallon milk or OJ carton, give it new life as an AC to chill a small space such as beside your bed or at your desk.Step 1 - Pick a ContainerThe idea here is to use what you have. Just about any container will do the trick, so be creative. To visualize, this is basically a mini version of the styrofoam cooler described above. For our description, well pretend youre using a half-gallon milk or orange juice-type carton.Step 2 - Pick a FanThe ideal fan for this task is a small computer fan. Place the fan on the milk carton and outline the size. Use a sharp razor to cut out the square and then glue the fan into the opening.The wires from the fan will be on the outside of the container. This is where your love of tinkering with electrical components comes in.Use a soldering gun to connect the wires from the fan to the wires on an AC adaptor (basic plug from old electronics) or a battery pack.Step 3 - Chill OutLay the carton on its side, fill it with ice, and enjoy the breeze coming out of the pour spout.Step 4 - Consider the AlternativesOnce you understand the concept here, you can play around with a variety of options. You can use any container, such as a small bucket or plastic tub. Just make sure it has a tight-fitting lid.Place your CPU fan tightly into a cutout in the lid and glue it into place. Then use tubes or piping as your air-delivery holes. Cut the lid and insert them, also gluing into place.For power, grab an old USB plug. Keep the part that plugs into the computer and strip the end that fits whatever phone or other gadget you no longer have.Connect the red and black wires to the CPU fan and plug the USB end into your computer to provide power to the AC.4. Give Your Fan ExhaustWhen the heat becomes overwhelming indoors, every degree of cooling helps. Small things matter.Since youre probably already using a fan, why not supercharge it? Its an easy way to improve cooling capacity without breaking the bank.Step 1 - Pick Your BottlesGrab whatever you have around the house. 20-ounce soda bottles, single-use water bottles, or bottles from sports drinks all work great.Step 2 - Remove Bottle BottomsUse a sharp razor or hacksaw to trim the bottom off the bottles. You dont need to remove very much. The goal is to open up the bottom.Step 3 - Create Air HolesGrab a drill of any kind and make several holes around the bottom half of the bottle to allow for airflow.Step 4 - Mount the BottlesUse zip ties, woven through the holes, to attach each bottle to the back of the fan grill, with the bottom facing up. Be sure to trim the excess zip tie plastic so it doesnt interfere with the fan blades.Step 5 - Fill with IcePlace several ice cubes into each bottle, filling them to the top (which is the bottom). As the ice melts, water will accumulate in the neck of the bottle. You can drain it by simply unscrewing the cap.5. Basic Swamp CoolerThis is as basic as it gets and requires almost no effort or supplies. The idea is to simply blow air across the surface of cold water to drop the temperature in the room.Step 1 - Choose a FanThe larger the fan the better. A box fan works great. If you use a taller fan, youll need to put your water up at the same height, using a table or other surface.Step 2 - Choose Your ContainerSelect a reservoir that offers a wide surface for the air to come into contact with the water. A flat, wide storage tub, plastic drawer, or similar container will all do the job.Step 3 - Fill and GoPlace ice and water into the container. Frozen ice packs or jugs will last the longest, but ice cubes work too. Place the tub in front of the fan and turn it on, allowing the air to blow directly over the surface of the ice and into your space.6. Ice Bucket ACThis one has been around a long time. The concept is the same as the styrofoam cooler above, but youll use a five gallon bucket instead of a cooler.Step 1 - Pick a BucketThe size and shape matter. The color doesnt. Grab whatever five-gallon bucket you can find that has a tight-fitting lid.Step 2 - Place the FanFind the largest fan you can that still fits within the parameters of the lid. Cut out a hole and place the fan, securing it in place if necessary. Your fan will face down into the bucket.Step 3 - Create ExhaustAs described for the styrofoam system, youll need some exhaust pipes. Again, PVC works well for this, but use what you have. Cut the holes with a hole saw or drill bit. Then place your pipe into the hole. Secure it with glue or another sealant if there is any gapping around it or it doesnt stay in place.Step 4 - Fill and ChillPlace your frozen milk jugs or other icy material inside, turn on the fan, and enjoy.How effective are homemade air conditioners?Lets face it, none of these options are going to create a deep freeze. Air on ice wont compete with a centralized AC system or even a window unit.However, creating DIY AC is exponentially cheaper than any form of air conditioning youll buy. Plus, the energy consumption is only a small percentage of what a unit costs, so youll save a ton of dough on the power bill too.These types of air conditioners undeniably lower the temperature in the space. The smaller the space, the more effectively they work. Basically, they are a good way to offer a bit of a reprieve if you can be directly in front of the unit.They wont cool an entire house, or even a large room, but they will bring down the temperature a few degrees while running.Do yourself, and your AC, a favor by doing everything you can to keep the space cool with other techniques.Open doors and windows at night and in the early morning. Dont run the dishwasher, clothes dryer, and other heat-creating appliances during the day.Close the blinds inside and outside the house when the sun is out. Use blackout curtains if you have them.Place fans facing the room in front of open doors when the outdoor temperature is cooler than indoors. Place another fan facing the open doors and windows upstairs or across the room.After blocking out light and heat sources and placing fans, use some of the homemade air conditioning systems above to offer additional cooling in the space.To get the cooling effect without AC devices, learn more about The Efficiency of Ancient Passive Heating and Cooling Techniques.

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