



GUIDE: HOW TO BLEED A RADIATOR

Version 3 – 04/01/2017

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Why bleed your radiators?

Over time, air can seep into your central heating, and will tend to bubble up to the top of your radiators - especially upstairs.

Radiators furthest away from the boiler/pump are normally affected, as well as radiators fed from down pipes. This can affect how efficiently the radiators heat your rooms. Therefore, it's worth checking to see if you need to empty air out, or bleed your radiators.

As well as having a low surface temperature, radiators can also be noisy when filled with air.

To check, when the central heating is on, run your hands over the radiator. If its cooler at the top than at the bottom, the chances are that air has built up. **Note:** Switch your heating off and wait for the radiators to cool down before bleeding them to avoid scalding yourself. It is more effective to perform a radiator bleed when the radiators are cold and the pump is off.

Preparation



Brass clock type radiator key

To release the air, you will need a radiator key. It's a small box spanner that fits in to the tiny release valve in your radiator.

To locate the radiator release valve, check the top edge of the radiator. You'll normally find a small square pin. That is the release valve.

Universal radiators or two connection radiators can also have a back vent on the rear of the panel, and not all vents are in line. **Note:** each panel of a double radiator has a back vent and both panels need to be vented.



Radiator release valve

As air is released, it can get a little messy as water can spray out of the radiator. Here some advice:

- Protect your paintwork and carpet by draping a cloth between the radiator and the wall, and on the carpet / floor beneath the radiator.
- Place a small bowl underneath the radiator to catch any water that might leak out
- Hold a cloth in your hand below the valve to catch any water.

Now that the preparations are done, here are the step by step instructions...

Step by Step



- 1) Place the radiator key into the release valve and carefully twist it anti-clockwise.

Note: Be careful not to unscrew the vent plug when bleeding; this can happen if the bleed screw is tight. Hold the vent plug back with an adjustable spanner if required.

- 2) Don't fully remove the bleed screw just untighten it - one or two turns in an anti-clockwise direction should suffice.

Note: If directional vent plugs are fitted, direct the bleed hole position to the floor for easy catchment of the water

- 3) The radiator will hiss as the air is slowly released.
- 4) Once all the air is released, after a few seconds, the hissing will be replaced by a gurgle and water will start to ooze or spray out.
- 5) Twist the key clockwise and close the valve.
- 6) When closing the vent in a clockwise direction, do not overtighten the bleed screw.
- 7) Repeat on all radiators in your household.

Additional Points:

- On sealed systems where the system is pressurised by a filling loop, it may be necessary to re-pressurise after venting. If so, recheck the radiators after re-pressurising and re-vent the radiators a second time if required
 - **Question:** How do I know that I have a sealed system?
 - ✓ The following sites explain how to determine this:

http://www.powerflushassociation.com/do_i_have_a_sealed_or_open_vented_central_heating_system.html

http://www.diydata.com/planning/central_heating/boiler.php

- Radiators fed from downpipes sometimes suffer from air blockages in the pipework. It may be necessary to drain off water through the radiator to ensure it is filled before venting
- Radiators fitted with automatic air vents don't need to be vented
 - **Question:** how do I know they have auto-vents?
 - ✓ The following sites explain how to determine this:

<http://www.radiatorvalvesonline.com/content/17-self-bleeding-radiator-valves>