Home Confidence 2
Basin Wastes

Types of Basin Waste

There are two different types of basin waste, depending on the type of basin you have:

Slotted Wastes

These are designed for sinks or basins with an inbuilt overflow (usually part of the basin itself – you won't see a visible pipe). The waste has a slot just above its thread, allowing any excess water to flow away through the overflow.

Unslotted Wastes

These are for sinks or basins without an overflow (not the best design choice) or those with an external overflow pipe that connects to the trap below.

Not Sure Which Type You Have?

If you're unsure, buy one of each type and return the one you don't use. Don't be tempted to install the wrong type – it won't work properly, and you'll have a soggy regret on your hands.

Last Updated: March 2025

Different Styles of Basin Waste

Pop-up Wastes

These are operated by a lever or button that lifts the waste cover to let the water out. While convenient, the mechanism often fails over time, leaving you with a waste that's stuck or won't close properly.

Click-Clack Wastes

(Also sometimes called Pop-up or Sprung Wastes). These work by pressing down on the waste cover to open or close it. In hard water areas like Bristol, they're prone to limescale buildup, which eventually causes the mechanism to fail.

If your Click-Clack waste gets stuck:
You'll likely need to remove the trap from underneath and push the cover up manually.

Try using "wet lube" to keep it functioning a little longer, but honestly, it's better to avoid installing them in the first place – they're not built to last.

Captive Waste

A more reliable option than Click-Clack wastes! These use a disc with an O-ring around the edge that flips over to seal or open the waste. Since they don't have mechanical parts, they're less likely to seize up.

Maintenance Tip:
Clean the O-ring regularly to prevent limescale buildup and ensure it seals properly.

Plug & Chain Wastes

The classic design – simple and effective. The only downsides? You might lose the plug or find the chain gets dirty over time. Luckily, replacements are easy to find and inexpensive.

Installing Basin Wastes

Different types of waste require slightly different approaches, but the key is always to ensure a watertight seal and proper alignment. Let’s break it down:

Most replacement basin wastes come with an exploded diagram showing the order in which the parts should be assembled. Here’s the general process:

Top Washer:

Place the washer between the underside of the waste and the ceramic of the basin. This creates a seal to prevent water from leaking out.

Underneath Washer & Backnut:

Beneath the basin, you’ll add another washer and then a Back Nut to hold the waste securely in place.

To tighten the backnut, you can use Pump Pliers or, my personal favourite, Slip Joint Pliers. Both give you good control and grip.

Alternatively, there are clever tools specifically designed for backnuts on sinks and basins, such as a Basin Backnut Spanner. These are particularly handy in confined spaces where traditional pliers might struggle to fit.

Last Updated: March 2025

They're a fantastic investment if you're working on multiple installations or find yourself frequently dealing with awkward angles.

Common Issues and Fixes

Sometimes, particularly with cheaper basins, the casting can be uneven, making it difficult to get a good seal. If you notice water seeping along the thread of the waste underneath the basin, try these options:

1. Replace the Top Seal with Clear Silicone
   Use a silicone sealant that sets even when wet, such as:

   OB1 (available at Screwfix)

   Plumbers Gold (available at Toolstation)

   CT1 (widely available)

   These products allow you to test your work immediately, without waiting for the silicone to dry. Apply a generous bead of silicone around the top of the waste to create a flexible, watertight seal.

2. Use a Basin Mate

   A Basin Mate is a specialised seal that plugs the hole underneath the basin, ensuring no leaks along the thread. While they can be a bit fiddly to install, they're incredibly effective and, in my opinion, virtually fail-safe.

Troubleshooting Checklist for Basin Waste Installation

1. Water Leaking Underneath the Basin

- [ ] Check the Top Washe on the Waster: Ensure it’s seated properly between the waste and the basin. If the basin’s surface is uneven, replace the washer with clear silicone sealant.
- [ ] Inspect the Backnut: Tighten the Backnut securely, but don’t overtighten as this can distort the washers.
- [ ] Use a Basin Mate: If leaks persist, install a Basin Mate to ensure a fail-safe seal around the thread.

2. Water Draining Slowly

- [ ] Check for Blockages: Ensure no debris or old sealant is obstructing the waste or trap.
- [ ] Inspect the Trap Alignment: Make sure the trap is installed correctly and not restricting water flow.
- [ ] Ventilation Issues: If the trap is struggling to maintain flow, consider an anti-siphon trap to improve drainage.

3. Waste Cover Not Sitting Properly

- [ ] Align the Waste: Ensure the waste is centred in the basin hole before tightening.
- [ ] Check the Mechanism: For pop-up or click-clack wastes, inspect the mechanism for misalignment or damage.

4. Click-Clack Waste Stuck Down

- [ ] Push from Below: Remove the trap and gently push the waste cover up from underneath.
- [ ] Apply Wet Lube: Use a silicone-based lubricant to loosen the mechanism.
- [ ] Replace the Mechanism: If it’s beyond repair, look for replacement parts online (many claim to fit most makes).

Last Updated: March 2025

5. Sealant Not Setting Properly

- ☐ Use Wet-Setting Sealant: Products like Plumbers Gold, OB1, or CT1 are ideal as they cure even in wet conditions.
- ☐ Clean the Surface: Ensure all surfaces are clean and dry before applying sealant for the best results.

6. Trap Connection Leaking

- ☐ Tighten Connections: Check all trap connections and tighten them securely.
- ☐ Replace Washers or O-Rings: If the leak persists, inspect washers or O-rings for wear and replace if necessary.
- ☐ Check the Trap Type: Ensure you've used the correct trap for the basin (e.g., P-trap, bottle trap).

See the Home Confidence 2 Traps Download for more information