HELP!
MY SHOWER IS LEAKING!

Many times, a leaking tiled shower can be the result of an unqualified person performing the work. A leaking shower can damage other areas of the bathroom or even the room below the shower. There are multiple reasons why this could happen. Learn what they are, and how to avoid them.

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Your first line of defense should be to have your plumber check for leaks in the:

- Shower control valve and/or pipe to the shower head
- Water supply lines
- Drain and trap

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Your second line of defense should be to have your shower door installer check for leaks:

- The door track (if present) because of screw penetrating the curb
- The vinyl sweep on the bottom of the door
- Between the vertical metal frame and the tiled wall
- Between the door and the metal frame attached to the tiled wall





WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU SEE OF A LEAKING SHOWER?

The ceiling in the room below my shower has water stains and/or water is dripping from the ceiling.



Potential Causes:

- Hole or leak in the pan liner under the tile
- Clogged weep holes in the drain assembly
- No waterproofing or incorrectly-applied waterproofing on the curb, walls, bench, niches, and seats
- Post-tile installation: installed grab bars, soap dishes, or other screw-attached items – not properly sealed

The floor tile just outside my shower is wet, damp, and/or discolored.



Potential Causes:

- Shower curb is not sloped properly toward the drain and water is running onto outside floor
- Shower pan membrane/liner not properly installed over the entire curb and continuing to the floor outside the shower
- Pan liner pierced during shower door installation

The tile on the inside of my shower walls, floor or curb is loose, the grout is cracking or there is a mineral deposit build up at grout/caulk lines.

Potential Causes:

- Blocked weep holes at drain
- Breach or incorrect installation of shower pan membrane/liner
- Improper or lack of waterproofing at wall to curb and/or other changes in plane
- Improper materials used under the tile
- Lack of proper ventilation (ceiling fan)







The tile on the curb is cracked and/or loose and/or the walls next to the curb are deteriorating.



Potential Causes:

- The curb was not properly constructed and/or waterproofed
- Backer board was nailed or screwed through the shower pan liner and into the curb. No waterproofing was applied
- The curb does not have the proper slope toward the drain
- The shower door was improperly installed (door installer error)
- Holes drilled into the curb or the floor on a barrier free shower
- Holes drilled into the wall and not properly sealed



The walls outside my shower are damp and spongy, drywall is bubbling, or damaged. There is evidence of moisture damage and mold/mildew on the wall(s) on the other side of the shower.

Potential Causes:

- The shower pan liner was not correctly installed
- The shower drain was not properly installed
- The shower drain weep holes are clogged
- Improper or lack of waterproofing on walls up to the shower head
- Fasteners were placed through the tiled surface and not sealed

My shower has a terrible odor.



Potential Causes:

- Incorrect drain installed
- The floor under the shower pan liner was not properly sloped toward the drain
- The shower drain weep holes are clogged
- The lower part of the drain body (below the tile surface) was incorrectly installed higher than the surrounding floor and will not drain
- Stagnant water and organic shower products (soap, shampoo, body wash, and body oil) are trapped below the tile allowing mold to grow

Unless otherwise indicated (such as plumber or glass installer), it is important that you seek the help of an industry QUALIFIED tile professional who uses tile industry standards and approved best practices for shower installations and strictly follows the material manufacturer's specifications and instructions.

It's helpful to understand this about showers: A properly-constructed shower manages and directs all the water that flows through it to the drain, and nowhere else. The shower "fixture" needs to be water tight, utilizing one of the two basic types of showers: a "Water In, Water Out" shower system, which is constructed with a clamping ring drain and waterproof shower pan liner or a "Sealed System" which employs a bonding flange drain and a waterproofing membrane that extends to the shower head. Both systems require that the walls, seats, ledges, niches, and curbs be treated with the appropriate waterproofing product. If the waterproofing, drain components, or any part of the shower system is not installed properly, is damaged, punctured, or compromised during installation, a leak can and will result in failure.



PLEASE NOTE: Beware of the claims that a leaking shower can be eliminated by using grout or caulking repairs/replacement or the application of a sealer or coating. These actions will, at best, provide only a temporary fix. Beware of individuals and companies who are NOT insured, licensed where required. Tile installers certified by the Ceramic Tile Education Foundation have demonstrated their dedication to their craft and have been evaluated by an industry-recognized program for proficiency. Wisely consider, interview, and hire dedicated tile professionals who have received proper training and have experience in the process of providing a long-lasting and trouble-free shower installation. A qualified tile professional will perform work in accordance with the Tile Council of North America (TCNA) *Handbook* Methods, American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standards, and the manufacturer's written instructions.

For Help Locating a Qualified Tile Installer near you visit:

https://www.tile-assn.com/search/custom.asp?id=2759

https://www.ceramictilefoundation.org/find-certified-tile-installers