

# 10 – Things, Not to flush Down the Toilet

Consider ourselves lucky, to be living in the United States. Not only do we have an awesome country, but we have plenty clean drinking water. We have so much clean water that we can afford to use it in our toilets.

Toilets often get used as a trash can. We've all been to our local stores and have seen the signs that read "Do Not Flush These Items." Mostly, the businesses put these signs up so people won't damage and clog their toilets. At home, however, you may be tempted to use the toilet as a trash can. After all, it's your toilet. If it breaks, you're the one who is responsible. I don't know why you'd be so cavalier with your own toilet, but in times of laziness all things are possible.

Flushing things non-human waste down the toilet wastes water. Every time you flush that toilet, it wastes about three gallons of water, depending on the toilet. It also increases your rent due to the water bill; if you're a habitual trash-flusher. You may also be forced to pay for a plumber or a brand-new loo; due to your devil-may-care attitude. It's not green, not at all. Some of these items like condoms and floss end up in the oceans and gumming up sewer systems.

Here is a list of commonly flushed items that shouldn't be. I show these to you in the hopes that you will think twice before throwing them in the toilet. Throw them in the trash, the compost heap or wherever else they belong.

1. **Cigarette Butts:** Contain chemicals and should be thrown in the regular trash.
2. **Sanitary Napkins:** Not for compost. In the bin, please.
3. **Tissues:** As long as the tissue didn't clean up a harsh chemical or something germ-infested, it can go in the compost bin.
4. **Hair:** Shave your head and put the hair in the compost bin. You can also reuse hair.
5. **Condoms:** These really cause a problem when tossed in the toilet. They supposedly biodegrade, but they are landfill-bound.
6. **Insects:** Just take them outside.
7. **Cotton Swabs:** Cardboard cotton swabs will compost. Plastic swabs will not. Germy and chemically stuff needs to go to the landfill.
8. **Diaper:** Landfill.
9. **Floss:** Not biodegradable. Gum up sewers. Landfill, please.
10. **Cleaning Wipes:** Does not break down and clogs pipes. In the trash bin, please.

Thank you,  
Richard & Vicki Harrison