

# Replace toilet

Toilet Replacement · May 17, 2026

CAN WAIT

Confidence: medium

<b>Skill level</b>	Intermediate — some prior DIY experience
<b>Total time</b>	Half a day total — 15 min to measure, 30 min to shop, 2-3 hours to install
<b>Total cost</b>	\$150-400 for the toilet plus about \$20 in install parts
<b>Permits</b>	None required for repairs in this guide
<b>Tools needed</b>	Adjustable wrench, Channel-lock pliers, 25-foot tape measure, Bucket and large sponge, Old towels, Small level, Putty knife or 5-in-1 scraper, Hacksaw (only if a closet bolt seizes)

## Diagnosis

**DIAGNOSIS** — What you have is a Pegasus 840-565. That was Home Depot's house-brand toilet from the late 90s into the early 2000s, before they rolled the whole line into Glacier Bay. It's a 1.28 gpf low-flow, elongated, two-piece. Good news: the 840-565 was built around a standard 12-inch rough-in, which is what almost every toilet sold in America uses, so replacement options are wide open. The trickier part is your space. From the bathroom photo, you've got a washer on one side and a vanity on the other, with not much breathing room. Before you buy anything, you need to measure two things: the rough-in (wall behind the toilet to the center of the closet bolts on the floor) and the side clearance (toilet centerline to the nearest wall or fixture on each side). NJ plumbing code calls for 15 inches minimum from toilet centerline to any side obstruction. If your existing toilet meets that, a new toilet with a similar footprint will too. Specific Home Depot picks are in Fix B.

*Numbered features (1, 2, 3...) reference the annotated photos at the end of this report.*

## Fix A — Measure Before You Shop

**Symptom this fixes:** You don't know yet whether a new toilet will fit, or which rough-in size to buy.

---

<b>Cost</b>	\$0 (just your tape measure)
<b>Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Note</b>	Write the numbers down on your phone. You'll forget at the store.

---

## Steps

- 1 Measure the rough-in:** from the finished wall behind the toilet to the center of one of the two closet bolts at the base. Standard is 12 inches. Anywhere from 11.75 to 12.25 means you have a 12-inch rough-in (yours almost certainly is).
- 2 Measure side clearance — left side:** from the centerline of the toilet (front to back) to the washer. Write it down.
- 3 Measure side clearance — right side:** from the centerline of the toilet to the vanity. Write it down.
- 4 Measure front clearance:** from the front edge of the bowl straight forward to the nearest wall, tub, or fixture. You want 21 inches minimum, 24 is comfortable.
- 5 Look at the shutoff valve under the tank.** Note whether it's a quarter-turn (lever handle) or multi-turn (round knob). Test that it actually closes by turning it off and flushing — if water keeps coming, the valve is shot and you'll want to handle that as part of the project.

**PRO TIP** — If your rough-in is exactly 10 inches (uncommon but does happen in old houses), your options narrow a lot — only a few models like the American Standard Cadet 3 10-inch and the Kohler Wellworth 10-inch exist. If you're at 14 inches, you can still use a 12-inch toilet; you just have a slightly larger gap behind, which is hidden by the tank anyway.

## Fix B — Pick the Right Toilet at Home Depot

**Symptom this fixes:** You want a powerful flush in a footprint that fits your tight space.

---

<b>Part</b>	1.28 gpf, 12-inch rough-in, elongated, two-piece toilet — three specific picks below
<b>Cost</b>	\$150-400 depending on model
<b>Time</b>	30 minutes at the store (or order online for store pickup)
<b>Note</b>	All three picks are stocked at Home Depot, all 12-inch rough-in, all elongated. None will be wider in the footprint than what you have now.

---

## Steps

- 1 Top pick for powerful flush** — American Standard Champion 4 Max. Around \$300-340. 1.28 gpf, MaP score of 1000 grams (the top of the test scale). The 4-inch flush valve clears the bowl in a single go. This is what I'd put in my own house if a clean flush mattered most.
- 2 Best value** — Glacier Bay Power Flush 2-piece elongated. Around \$150-180. This is literally the successor product to your Pegasus — same Chinese factory, just rebranded. 1.28 gpf, MaP around 800g, which is still strong. Hard to beat for the money if budget matters.
- 3 Premium pick** — Kohler Cimarron Comfort Height with Class Five flush. Around \$350-400. 1.28 gpf, MaP 1000g, 17-inch seat height (easier on adult knees, less ideal if you have small kids).
- 4** Skip anything labeled HET (high-efficiency) under 1.28 gpf unless you've seen the MaP score — sub-1.0 gpf toilets can struggle on solids no matter what the marketing says.
- 5 Standard height (about 15in to seat) vs.** Comfort height (about 17in) is personal preference. Your current Pegasus is standard. Comfort is easier on the back; standard is more universal.

**PRO TIP** — MaP score (Maximum Performance test) is the only objective number for flush power. Look it up at [map-testing.com](http://map-testing.com) or on the spec sheet at Home Depot. 800g and up flushes well; 1000g is essentially perfect. Ignore brand-y names like PowerFlush or PowerWash if there's no MaP behind them.

## Fix C — Pull the Old Toilet and Set the New One

**Symptom this fixes:** Time to swap.

**WARNING** — The two cracks I see most often: overtightened closet bolts crack the bowl base, overtightened tank-to-bowl bolts crack the tank floor. Snug, not jammed. Hand-tight plus a small turn with the wrench. If you hear a tick or feel a give while tightening, STOP.

<b>Part</b>	New wax ring (\$5), new closet bolts kit (\$5), new braided stainless supply line (\$10)
<b>Cost</b>	About \$20 in install parts
<b>Time</b>	2-3 hours, including cleanup
<b>Note</b>	Lay out a flattened cardboard box next to the bathroom door — you'll set the old toilet on it.

## Steps

- 1 Turn off water at the shutoff under the tank. If it won't fully close, shut off the main to the house.
- 2 Flush and hold the handle down to drain as much water as possible. Sponge the rest of the tank and bowl into a bucket. Towels for the dregs.
- 3 Disconnect the supply line at the bottom of the tank with the adjustable wrench.
- 4 Remove the two nuts under the tank that hold it to the bowl. Lift the tank off and set it aside.
- 5 Pop the plastic caps off the two closet bolts at the base of the bowl. Hold each bolt with channel-locks while you unscrew the nut. If the bolt spins and won't loosen, cut it with the hacksaw just above the nut.
- 6 **Straddle the bowl**, rock it gently side to side to break the wax seal, then lift it straight up. Set it on the cardboard.
- 7 Stuff a rag into the open flange in the floor to block sewer gas. Scrape off all the old wax with a putty knife until the flange is clean.
- 8 **Inspect the flange.** It should be solid metal or PVC, sitting on top of the finished floor, not below it, and not cracked. If it's broken, corroded, or sunken, stop here and see the When to Call a Pro list.
- 9 Drop the new closet bolts into the slots in the flange. Push the rubber retainer washers down to hold them upright.
- 10 Set the new wax ring on top of the flange (I prefer this over sticking it to the bowl — you can see the bolts as you lower it).
- 11 **Lift the new bowl**, position it over the bolts so the bolts poke up through the holes in the base, and lower it straight down. Do not twist.
- 12 **Sit on the bowl.** Your weight compresses the wax ring fully and gets a good seal.
- 13 **Place a washer and nut on each bolt.** Snug them alternately, quarter-turn at a time, until the bowl just stops moving on the floor. Stop there.
- 14 **Trim the bolts with the hacksaw**, leaving about a half-inch above the nut. Snap on the plastic caps.
- 15 Assemble the tank onto the bowl per the new toilet's instructions — rubber gasket, bolts down through tank, washers and nuts below. Snug, not jammed.
- 16 Connect a NEW braided stainless supply line from the shutoff to the tank inlet. Hand-tight on both ends, then a quarter turn with the wrench. No teflon tape needed on compression fittings.
- 17 **Turn the water back on slowly.** Let the tank fill. Flush three or four times. Check every connection — shutoff, supply line top and bottom, tank-to-bowl, base — with a dry finger for drips.
- 18 **Optional but recommended:** caulk around the base with white silicone, leaving a 2-inch gap at the back so any future leak shows up on the floor instead of hiding under the toilet.

**PRO TIP** — While the old toilet is out, this is your one cheap chance to upgrade a multi-turn shutoff (the round-knob kind) to a quarter-turn ball valve. About \$10 and 15 minutes. Quarter-turns either close or they don't — no more wondering if it's really off. Caveat: if the shutoff is fed from old galvanized steel pipe (gray, threaded — possible in a 1895 house), leave it alone and have a plumber do that part. Galvanized threads love to crumble at the worst moment.

## What it should cost

### DIY (parts)

\$150–\$400

Toilet \$120-380 (see Fix B), wax ring \$5, new closet bolts kit \$5, braided stainless supply line \$10. Always buy a new supply line — never reuse the old one.

### Hire a pro

\$400–\$700

\$250-400 labor from a licensed plumber plus the toilet. Most will pick up the toilet from Home Depot for you and haul the old one away.

## Permits & codes

Permits are probably not required, but verify these items locally:

- Whether your Ridgefield Park / Bergen County building department requires anything for a like-for-like toilet swap (almost never on an existing flange, but worth a 2-minute phone call)
- That any new toilet you buy is 1.28 gpf or less — NJ water-conservation rules require it on replacements
- 15-inch minimum centerline-to-side-wall clearance per IPC, which NJ follows

## When to call a pro

Most of what's above is within reach for any homeowner willing to spend an hour with the right tools. But there are situations where calling a pro is the right call:

- 1 Closet flange is cracked, rusted through, or sitting below the finished floor — that's a flange repair or extender, often a half-day job by itself.
- 2 You pull the old toilet and find rotted or spongy subfloor — water has been leaking long enough to damage the floor, and that needs repair before any new toilet sits on it.
- 3 Supply shutoff doesn't fully close, or you see old galvanized steel pipe feeding it — get a plumber to replace the angle stop, especially in a 129-year-old house where the supply may be original.
- 4 You crack the new bowl while installing it (it happens — porcelain is unforgiving).
- 5 After install, the toilet rocks under your weight, or you see any water at the base after a few days. Don't shim and forget it; figure out why.

## If you do hire it out

Red flags to watch for:

- Quoting more than \$400-500 labor for a like-for-like swap on a sound flange — that's 1 to 1.5 hours of actual work.
- Trying to upsell a flange repair or subfloor work without showing you the flange first with the old toilet out.
- Won't write the specific toilet model on the invoice (so you can't comparison-shop the parts).
- No NJ master plumber license number on the truck or paperwork — NJ requires plumber licensing and you can verify it online.
- Wants cash only or full payment up front.

## Recommended Hammond Re-Engineered guide

**001-replace-a-toilet** — find it at [hammondreengineered.com/guides](https://www.hammondreengineered.com/guides).

### Want more on this project?

If anything above is unclear, just reply to the email this PDF arrived in — it goes straight to me. For deeper help on this same project, two options:

#### **\$49 — Reviewed Report**

I personally review the report, add notes from my own experience, and send you the final version within 24 hours.

[hammondreengineered.com/reviewed-report](https://www.hammondreengineered.com/reviewed-report)

#### **\$149 — 30-Minute Video Consult**

Talk it through with me on video, with this report and your photos in front of us. One-time, no commitments.

[hammondreengineered.com/consult](https://www.hammondreengineered.com/consult)

And for general how-to on other home projects, browse the full DIY guide library at [hammondreengineered.com/guides](https://www.hammondreengineered.com/guides). If you want photo-specific advice on a different project, send another report request at [hammondreengineered.com/report](https://www.hammondreengineered.com/report).

*Disclaimer: This guide is informational only and not a substitute for professional advice. Always shut off water/power before working on the relevant systems. Hammond Re-Engineered LLC and the author assume no liability for damage or injury resulting from the use of this guide.*

## Photo 1 of 2



*Diagnosed from this photo. Numbered features are addressed in the sections below.*

- 1 Pegasus 840-565 · 1.28 gpf (12in rough-in)
- 2 Side-mount fill valve
- 3 Flush tower / flapper
- 4 Heavy mineral staining
- 5 Chrome angle-stop shutoff

## Photo 2 of 2



*Diagnosed from this photo. Numbered features are addressed in the sections below.*

- 6 Existing footprint to match
- 7 Washer left — tight clearance
- 8 Vanity right — check 15in rule

## What you submitted

**Project:** Replace toilet

**Photos:** 2 photos attached

**Your description:** See attached photo. I need to replace the toilet with another that will fit. Tell me which ones at Home Depot have a powerful flush and will fit

### How to get an even better diagnosis next time

The more I see and the more context you give me, the more specific the diagnosis can be. A few things that consistently improve report quality:

- **Take clear, well-lit photos.** Open windows or use a flashlight. Blurry or dim photos hide model numbers, cracks, and corrosion that are the diagnosis.
- **Mix wide shots with close-ups.** One photo from across the room for context, then close-ups of any labels, drips, or damaged areas.
- **Capture model numbers and stickers.** A 3-second close-up of the data plate on a water heater or HVAC unit lets me name the exact part you need.
- **Be specific in the description.** "Toilet runs every few minutes" beats "toilet broken." Tell me when it started, what changed recently, and what you've already tried.

## Want to dig deeper on this project?

**Resubmit with better photos — 50% off.** Use code **DIYREADER** at checkout for \$4.99 instead of \$9.99 on a follow-up submission. Apply the tips above and I'll have a lot more to work with.

[hammondreengineered.com/report](https://hammondreengineered.com/report)

### \$49 — Reviewed Report

I personally read this report, add my own notes from doing the same job a hundred times, and email you a fresh version within 24 hours.

[hammondreengineered.com/reviewed-report](https://hammondreengineered.com/reviewed-report)

### \$149 — 30-Minute Video Consult

Talk it through with me on video, with this report and your photos in front of us. One-time, no commitments.

[hammondreengineered.com/consult](https://hammondreengineered.com/consult)

**Bigger project? Custom project management.**

If your project is a full bath, kitchen, or whole property where one report isn't enough, I act as the homeowner's general contractor — sourcing trades, managing the schedule, and keeping the budget honest. The full overview lives here:

[hammondreengineered.com/services](https://hammondreengineered.com/services)

Or get in touch directly:

**Email:** [contact@hammondreengineered.com](mailto:contact@hammondreengineered.com)

**Phone:** [\(551\) 999-1815](tel:(551)999-1815)

*Disclaimer: This guide is informational only and not a substitute for professional advice. Always shut off water/power before working on the relevant systems. Hammond Re-Engineered LLC and the author assume no liability for damage or injury resulting from the use of this guide.*