

Utility room water hoses

If the hot and cold water supply hoses for your washing machine are the ones installed ten years or so ago when your home was built, they are very likely to be overdue for replacement. The black rubber hoses deteriorate over time, and because the hoses are under constant water pressure they can develop a weak spot and rupture, releasing a flood of water. This is a very common cause of home damage and easily avoided.

It's not expensive, and the work is simple.

Buying the new hoses

The hoses are universal and any of them will fit any brand of washing machine. They come complete with new plastic washers for sealing the fittings. Not surprisingly, Lowes has just the thing. They have a display in the appliance department, and more in the plumbing aisle. **Be sure to get the kind that have the steel mesh visible through the outer coating, and buy the six foot length.** The extra length lets the washing machine be moved in and out conveniently without having to remove the hoses.



And of course Amazon has the same thing available, delivered to your door, considerably cheaper, and often with free shipping. Just search on "washer hoses". Amazon shows them with both straight and right-angle attachments. Check the ones you have now to see which you need.

Tools you will need

You'll need a pair of pliers because the old hoses will have been tightened onto their fittings pretty firmly. The kind that works best is like these, known as channel-lock pliers:



If you don't happen to have these then just use any pliers with jaws wide enough to fit over the metal fitting on the end of the hose.

You'll also need a container and a towel to catch the water from the old hoses. There won't be much, just a couple of cups.

Installation

Unplug the washer's electrical cord from the outlet.

The water supply valves in the wall recess have red and blue handles for hot and cold. **Turn those off before moving the washer.**



You can leave the large plastic drain hose connected if you aren't going to stretch it out too much, but if you want to take it out of the wall recess you can unhook the reusable beaded plastic safety cord that keeps it in place. Just be sure not to lay the drain hose flat – it probably has some water in it.

Slide the washer out from the wall far enough to access the back of it. It will be heavy and might require a bit of assistance from a friend. Be careful not to pull too hard on the old water hoses and the large plastic drain hose. Make a note of which valve connects to which inlet on the back of the washer. Those inlets may be marked with a "C" and an "H" or be colored to correspond to the supply valves, but make the note if they aren't.

Remove the hoses at the wall end first. Put your water container under the hoses and stuff the towel in around the supply valve you are working on to catch any immediate release of water. Be ready to put the end of the hose in the container as soon as it comes loose – it will be full of water.

It might be useful to mark the date of installation on the new hoses before installing them. Be sure all four metal connectors have the plastic washers in them before fastening them in place. If one end has a little screen on the washer, put that end on the wall fitting.

Connect the new hoses to the supply valves and to the corresponding fittings on the washer, and tighten. Don't put too much torque on the plastic connectors on the back of the washing machine, just firmly tight is enough. The manufacturers recommend tightening the connectors by hand until they stop, then about 1/2 turn more with pliers.

Turn both the water supply valves back on, plug the electrical cord back in, and set the washer to start filling for a load and let it fill for a minute or two. This will fill the new hoses under pressure and let you check for leaks. A little more tightening will usually take care of any seepage.

Slide the washer back in place leaving plenty of room for the hoses and drain. Be sure to put the plastic safety cord back where it was on the drain hose. Now go have a cold drink and congratulate yourself on another job well done.

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