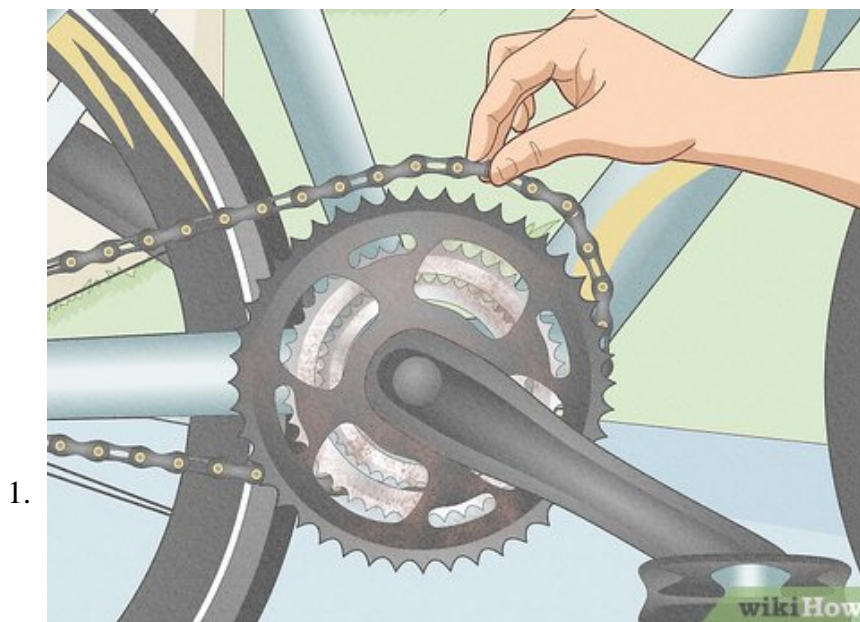


How to Clean Chainrings

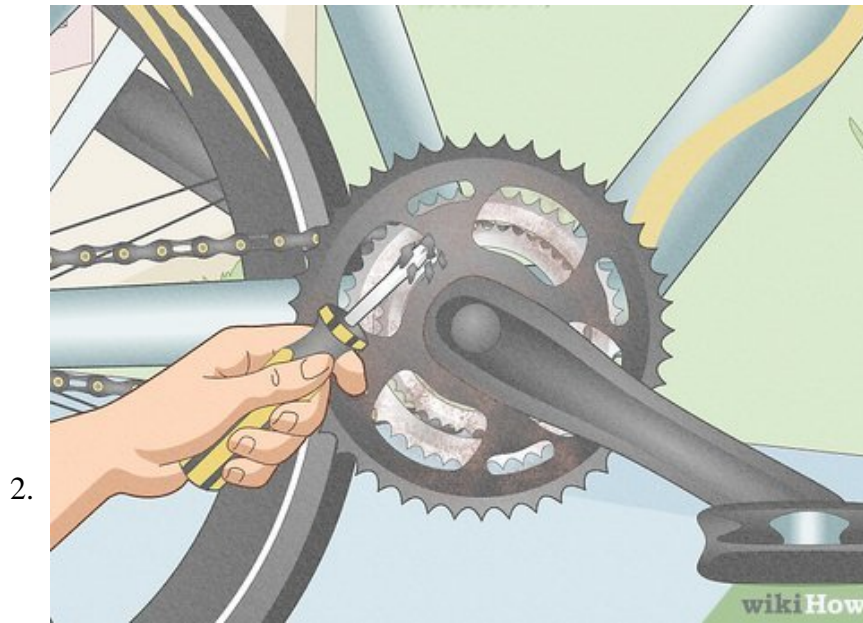
Whether you're a pro cyclist or an occasional biker, keeping your chainring clean is a must! A dirty chainring can make it harder to pedal or shift, and all that gritty buildup can lead to some expensive wear and tear. How often you should...

Degreasing the Chainring



Lift the chain off of the chainring and set it on the frame. Grasp the chain between your thumb and index finger and lift it upward off the chainring and let it rest on the frame just behind the gears. You may need to wiggle it a little to move it off of the chainring. This will give you full access to all the nooks and crannies that need to be cleaned.^[1]

1. The chainring is located near the front wheel of your bike.
2. Make sure your bike is outside in an area that you don't mind getting wet.
3. Wear old clothing and some gloves if you don't want to have to deal with stains or super dirty hands.



Use the tip of a screwdriver to clean out bits of grime. If you notice lots of buildup in the chainring, use the tips of a small screwdriver (or any tool with a small, pointy tip) to pick out those bits. Check between the rings because that's where grime is most likely to build up.^[2]

1. It's important to get these little sneaky spots because grime stuck between the rings can mess up your chain and gears over time.
2. Go ahead and pick out any bits stuck on the jockey wheels (the smaller circular gears that the chain loops around near the back wheel) or anywhere else you see small bits of grime.



Wipe down the chainring with a wet, soapy brush if it's not super dirty. Squeeze a few drops of mild dish soap into a large bowl and fill it with water so it gets sudsy. Dunk a brush or rag into the water and wipe down the entire chainring.^[3]

1. Loop the rag around the back of the chainring and pull it back and forth to scrub down the inside of the chainring.

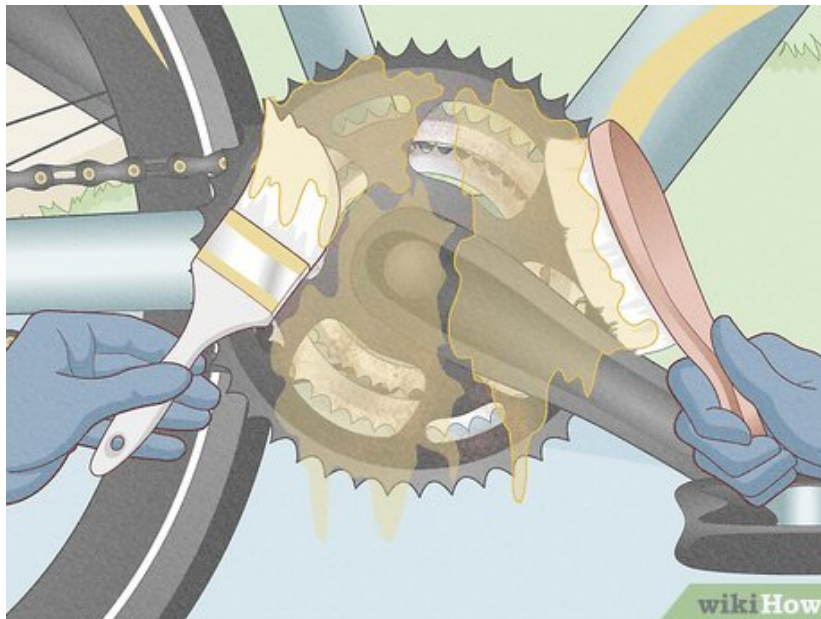
4.



Wear gloves and protective eyewear. Put on goggles and disposable gloves to protect your eyes and hands. If you don't have these items, some sunglasses and heavy-duty work gloves will do the trick. Just know that you'll need to soak and wash the gloves afterward to get the degreaser out.^[4]

1. If you accidentally get degreaser on your skin, wash it off with a mild soap for at least 15 minutes.

5.



Scrub degreaser onto the chainring for a deeper clean. Fill a disposable plastic cup with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (59 mL) of degreaser and dip a regular paintbrush into it. Paint it onto the chain and use a scrub brush to scrub it into each nook and cranny. To easily scrub the sides of the chainring, hold the nylon brush on one edge and spin the pedal backward to turn it.^[5]

1. A nail brush will work well for this, but any medium to firm-bristled nylon brush will do.

Warning: Put a pan or bowl under the area where you're working to catch any drippings from the degreaser and water. Degreaser is toxic and flammable, and any small amount that gets into the groundwater can cause serious pollution. If you're worried about letting any spill, use a plant-based degreaser.^[6]



Rinse the chainring with water and let it dry. Use a hose to spray down the chainring and, if you washed them, the jockey rings. Get as much of the degreaser off as you can and use soapy water if you need to (mild dish soap will do).^[7]

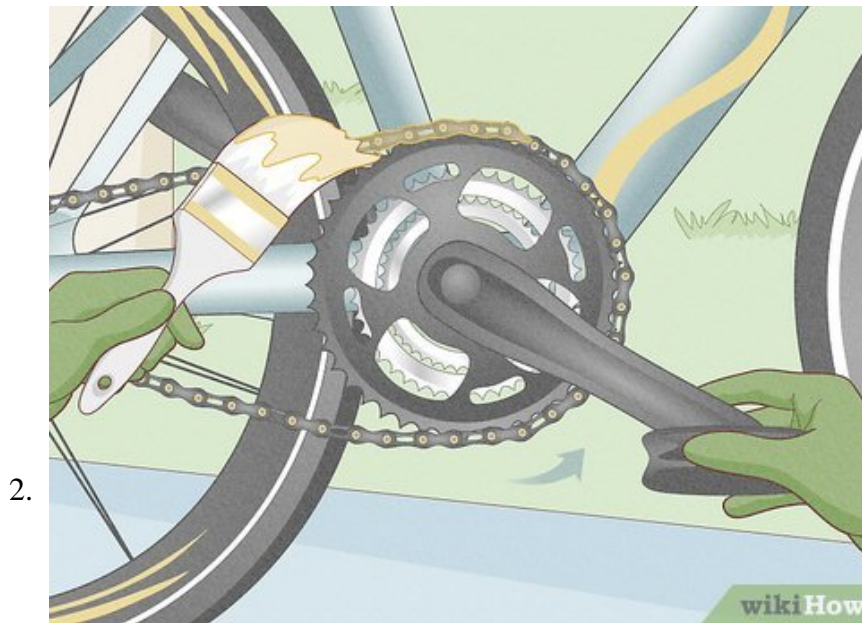
1. It's important to rinse it down because degreaser can get onto the chain as it moves along the chainring. Assuming you lubricate your chain (which you should every 300 to 600 miles), degreaser residue will make it harder for the lubricant to stick.
2. To help it dry faster, replace the chain on the chainring and take the bike for a quick 1-minute ride or spin the pedal backward for 1 minute.

Cleaning the Chain



Put on gloves and protective eyewear. Wear goggles or, if you don't have them, sunglasses to help shield your eyes. Put on heavy-duty work gloves or disposable gloves if you have some.^[8]

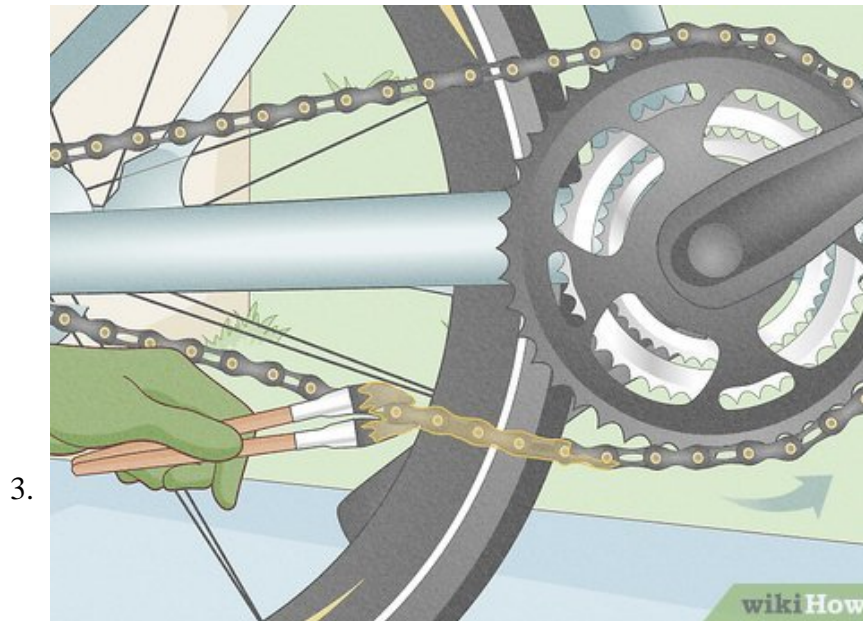
1. If any degreaser gets on your skin, wash it off with mild soap and water.
2. If you accidentally get a little in your eye, flush the eye with cool water for 15 minutes. If you feel burning or pain after that, get professional medical help.



Brush degreaser onto the chain while pedaling backward. Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (59 mL) of degreaser into a disposable plastic cup and dip a wide paintbrush into it. Grab the pedal closest to you and spin it backward to move the chain under the brush. Re-dip the brush into the degreaser every half or full chain rotation.^[9]

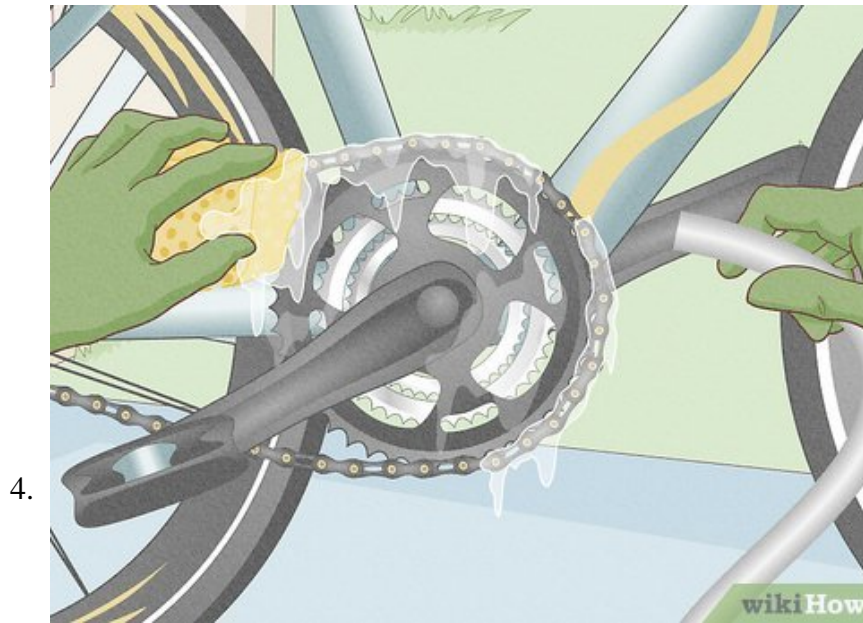
1. You can find degreaser online, at your local bike store, or at most home improvement stores.
2. If the cassette (the system of sprockets around the back wheel hub of your bike), or jockey wheels also look grimy, go ahead and paint it onto those parts too. These need to stay just as clean because any dirt on them will get transferred to the chain and, subsequently, to the chainring.

3. If you have a spray degreaser, carefully spray it onto the chain where it connects with the cassette, pedaling backward as you spray it to get the whole chain. You can also spray it onto the bristles of a scrub brush and apply it that way.
4. Backpedaling will help work the degreaser into the gears.



Sandwich the chain between 2 nail brushes and turn the pedal backward. To get a deeper clean, place 1 brush on top and 1 on the bottom of the chain to completely surround the chain. Once they're in place, hold them together with 1 hand and use your other to turn the pedal backward.^[10]

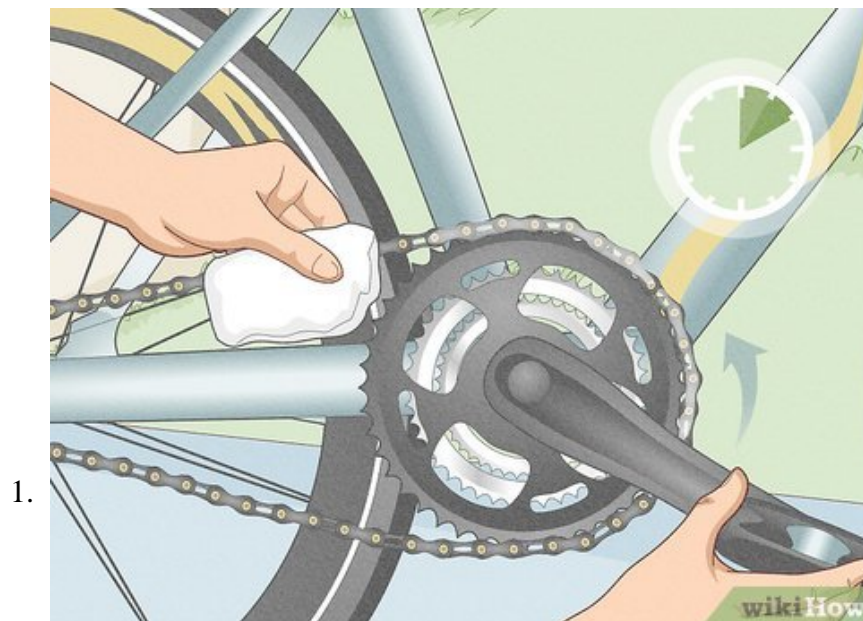
1. This will run the chain through the bristles and save you the work of having to scrub down the chain yourself.
2. You might consider trimming the inside bristles of the nail brush down a little so it fits snugly around the chain.
3. It's especially important to get rid of the gunk between the individual chains because it'll wear away at the drive train.
4. If you have a chain cleaner device that degreases and scrubs the chain down at the same time, use that instead.^[11]



Wipe down the chain with a sponge full of soapy water and rinse it. Fill a bowl or bucket with water and mild dish soap. Stir it around so it gets nice and sudsy and then dip your sponge into it. Rub down the chain with the sponge, making sure the soapy water runs all the way through the small links. Rinse the chain with a hose when you're done.^[12]

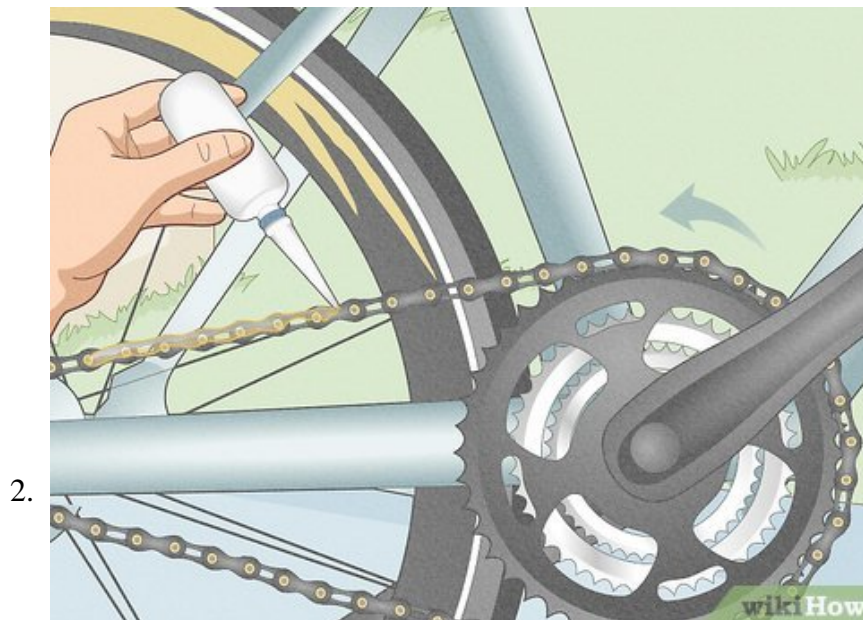
1. If you don't have mild dish soap, it's okay to just spray it down with a hose.
2. It's important to remove all the degreaser from the chain so the chain lubricant stays on properly.
3. If your entire bike is dirty, go ahead and give it a full cleaning. It feels great to ride on a sparkling clean bike!

Lubricating the Chain



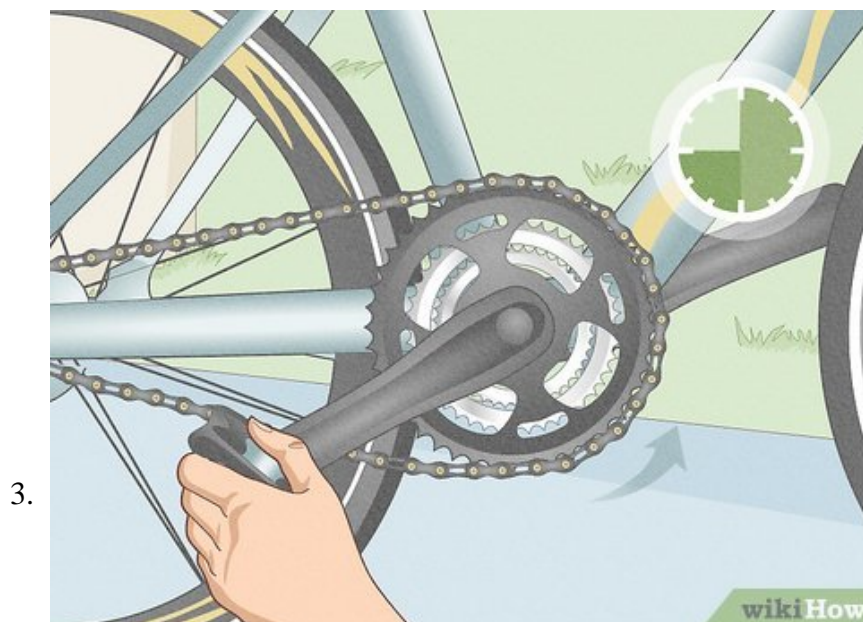
Dry the chain with a rag and wait for 5 to 10 minutes. Lay a dry rag over your palm and lightly grab the chain. Rotate one of the pedals backwards so the chain runs through the rag. Do this for about 45 seconds or until the chain feels dry to the touch. Let it sit for about 5 to 10 minutes after so you know it's fully dry before you lube it.^[13]

1. You can also take a 5-minute spin around the block to help it dry faster.



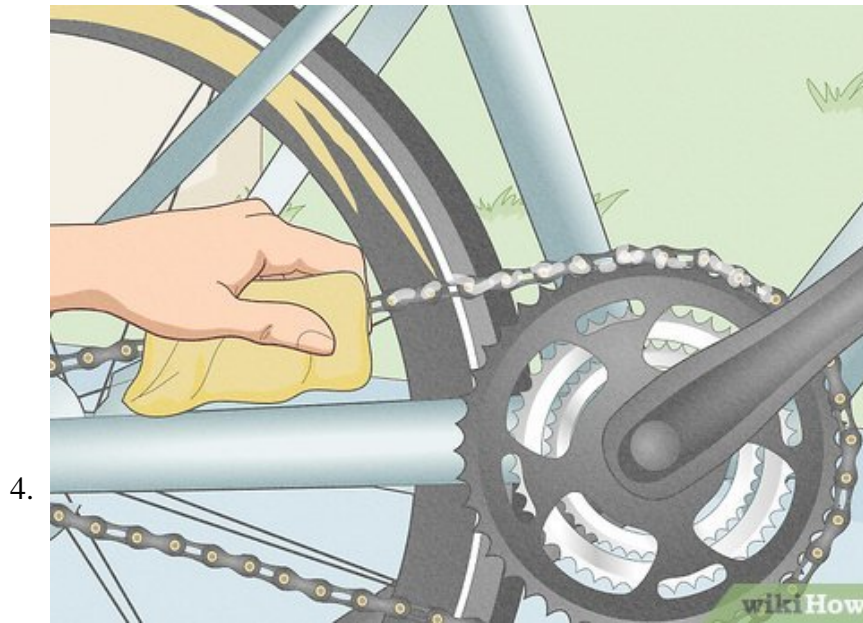
Apply the lube while backpedaling one of the pedals. Put the applicator tip on the inner part of the chain and squeeze it as you turn the pedal backward. Keep applying and backpedaling until you've gone over the same part of the chain twice. It's hard to keep track, but do your best to guess.^[14]

1. As the chain moves, be sure to hold the applicator tip right over the chain so you're not spilling any.



Turn the pedal backward for 30-45 seconds at a medium speed. Grab the pedal closest to you and spin it backward about 30 to 40 rotations to work the oil into the chain and chain drive.^[15]

1. This will help the lube seep down into the inside rollers of the chain.



Wipe off any excess oil with a microfiber cloth. Place a microfiber (or lint-free) towel over your palm and grasp the chain with it. Just like before, turn the pedal backward to run the chain along the cloth.^[16]

1. This is important because leaving lube on the chain can attract dirt and, over time, leave your chain covered in a grimy paste. The more grime is in the chain, the quicker the parts will wear out.

You finished reading the article "**How to Clean Chainrings**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.