

So you dropped your phone in the toilet?
by Annie Bathgate, EFT-CC

I'm writing this article out of a sincere desire to help you, the reader, if you did in fact drop your phone in the toilet. By no means, do I have personal experience with this horrifying concept. However, if I had experience with this nightmare, it might happen like this.

If I would have accidentally dropped my phone in the toilet, it would have been for only one reason; I was wearing my new skinny jeans that I finally fit into after several months of good exercise and eating well. In celebration, I would be wearing these jeans because I looked great in them and wanted to show my husband how cute his wife is. I would be getting ready for a night out and I might have put my cell phone in the back pocket of my new skinny jeans. Now, I am a woman, and so putting the phone in the back pocket is a bad idea if you are going off to the bathroom.

So, as we continue pretending that this experience might have happened to me, I'd like to pass along some advice on what to do if you in fact do drop your phone in the toilet;

1. **Pull it out of the toilet.** I know you don't want to go in there. You have to. Cell phones flushed down anyone's plumbing, whether it be an office building, apartment building or home, is not a kind action to pull on the owner. It's bad phone karma. Get the phone out. It may be a tale that you don't want to tell others, and that's fine. But get it out of the toilet.
2. **DO NOT TURN IT ON.** Your cell phone is a machine. Machines typically run on electricity. Toilets typically have 'water' in them. Electricity and water DO NOT MIX. If you, in a moment of panic and despair, attempt to turn on your phone to see if it works, STOP. If you do this, you run the risk of causing damage to the internal wiring of the phone, because why? Electricity and water do not mix. Take the phone out of the toilet but do not turn it on.
3. **Take the phone apart.** Taking the phone apart might be a little tricky, but it is your best bet that you might be able to salvage it. First, take the battery out and let it sit. Next, take apart the phone as much as possible, including the little teeny tiny screws that you probably don't have a screwdriver for. If you don't own a teeny tiny screwdriver set, call your brother who wears glasses and ask him for his set of screwdrivers for his glasses. He may even volunteer to help take your phone apart. Guys like that stuff.

4. **Let it dry for twenty four hours.** I know, you think I'm kidding here, right? I'm not. You need to let it dry. Leave it alone, preferably in a well vented area. Stick it in direct sunlight or bright light to help it dry. You want every speck of moisture to up and leave. This is really important to allow the phone to ever have a chance for working again.
5. **See if it works.** Did you really wait for twenty four hours? I wouldn't...if it happened to me. If it happened to me I would have turned the stupid thing on the moment I pulled it out of the toilet. Now at this point, you should have a good guess if it is working or not. Play around with it if it comes on. See if you get a signal. Try calling your house phone or your sister and see if it works. If so, congratulations and you can stop reading. You probably let it sit for twenty four hours. If you are like me and didn't, read on.
6. **Ask your service provider to do a diagnostic check on it.** Most cell phone companies nowadays have a local repair store. Go during normal business hours. Do not go at night after work. If you do, you might get stuck in a line with everyone else for an hour while everyone else who also didn't drop their phones in toilets ask them to do a diagnostic test on their phone. The test is typically covered under your plan and they can let you know if it is fixable, which can be a small fee of \$35, or they can come back with the dreaded words: WIRE DAMAGE. If your phone is fixable, congratulations. If you turned on your phone right after you dropped it in the toilet and they said it had wire damage, read on.
7. **Ask about your plan and see if you are eligible for a discount for a future phone.** Most service plans will offer you discounts for new phones after being with them for a year, or two years and so on. Asking if you are due for a discount can help you decide your next step. If your phone has wire damage and you are not due for a discount off a new phone, you have a few options...
8. **Purchase a new phone, buy a refurbished phone or ask your friends for one of their old phones.** Buying a new phone can be a weight on your check book; the least expensive you are going to find full price is around \$200. It is worth asking your cell phone provider if they have any refurbished phones lying around. These are phones that have been repaired and are sold at a lesser price. Or, start calling all your friends from your house phone and see if anyone has an old phone lying around that they wouldn't mind giving to you. If you are so lucky to have a wonderful friend, like I might have if this story was true, I would advise, that as a thank you, purchase a generous Starbucks gift card to give to your friend in gratitude. The phone company can easily activate a new phone for you, typically again, free of charge.

9. **Do not put cell phone in back pocket or purchase insurance for your plan.** I would highly advice either of these plans, since it can get expensive dropping phones in toilets. Get in the habit of not bringing your phone to the ladies room. Do your calls and texting while not in that arena. Insurance may be worth its wait in wet cell phones if this is a common phenomenon for you. Of course, it never happened to me.

Annie Bathgate is a student of Life and accidentally dropped her phone in the toilet one day, but don't tell anyone. After not finding sufficient help, she wanted to offer friendly guidelines to those who it may happen to in the future. You can read more about Annie and her services at her website at www.ReturnToHarmony.com.