

# HOW TO COVER YOUR MISTAKES

## EXPUNGE A NASTY E-MAIL



### Recall it.

Some e-mail programs allow you to “recall” a message you sent, giving you the option of deleting or replacing it. This feature only works if the recipient is also using the same brand of software and if the recipient is on your local area network. In the Sent Items folder, open the e-mail and click “Recall This Message” on the Tools menu (or Actions menu, depending on which software you have). Follow the instructions.



### Retract it.

Several free software programs or add-ins allow you to “retract” (delete) an e-mail before it is read. Instead of sending the actual message, these programs send the recipient a link to a website that stores your sent e-mail, enabling you to send a “delete” command before the recipient opens the message. If you tend to get angry and impulsive, consider buying such a program.



### Delete the message from the recipient’s computer.

As soon as you realize your mistake, call the recipient and send him on a fool’s errand, or have the recipient paged to another area. Go to his desk. Kneel so you are not easily visible. Open his e-mail program and

delete the message. Check the “trash” mailbox to make sure it was fully deleted and not just moved. Delete it permanently.



### Claim poor spelling or blame the automatic spell checker.

Insist to the recipient that your message isn’t what you meant to say. Explain that the bad language was a typo, or that it was a typo that the automatic spell checker changed into another, unintended word.



### Claim that someone else sent the e-mail from your machine.



### Blame computers generally.

Explain that a moment’s frustration was blown way out of proportion because computers make it so easy to vent and send. Claim that before computer technology and e-mail, this never would have happened.

## Be Aware

- It is best to queue outgoing e-mail in your outbox rather than send it immediately. This gives you the opportunity to pause and reflect on your wording, and then change or delete the message before it is sent.
- One e-mail program offers a “Mood Watch” function that monitors your typing and alerts you if a message is approaching “flame” status.

## SALVAGE A COFFEE-STAINED DOCUMENT

If you are working with a signed contract or a document you cannot replace, you will have to restore the existing pages.

### 1 Blot the stain immediately.

Use a clean rag or paper towel to remove as much of the coffee as possible before it dries. Blot, do not wipe. The longer the stain sets, the more difficult the removal.

### 2 Examine the stain.

If the stain caused the ink to run, you are probably dealing with an unsalvageable document. Follow the directions in step 3 to be sure.

### 3 Determine the printing method.

Wet the end of an ear swab and quickly run it across a non-stained word. If the ink transfers to the cotton, the document was printed on an ink-jet printer and salvage is not possible. Use as is.

### 4 Make a vinegar solution.

For a small stain (1 to 2 inches in diameter), mix 1 tablespoon white vinegar with 1 tablespoon cold water. (Double or triple the amounts based on stain size.) Pour the mixture into a plate or shallow dish.

### 5 Place the stained document on the edge of the dish.

Using a metal spoon, weight the stained portion so it rests in the solution. It is not necessary to immerse the entire sheet.

### 6 Soak for 5 minutes.

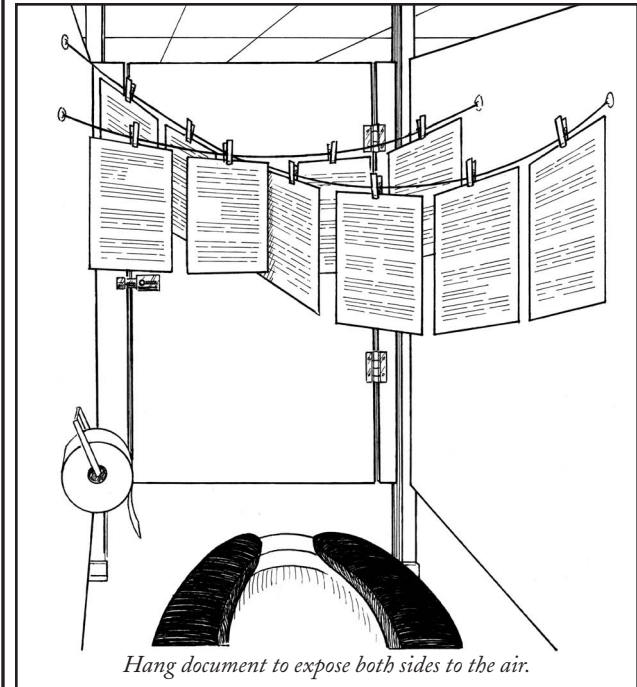
If the stain is still present, let the document soak for five additional minutes.

### 7 Remove from the solution and blot.

Blot the wet area using a clean, dry paper towel. Do not rub.

### 8 Dry.

For best results, clip the paper to a string with a clothespin or paper clip to expose both sides to the



air. Drying time is about 30 minutes. If time is of the essence or the document is very wrinkled, use a warm iron to carefully smooth the stained area and to speed the drying process.

### **Be Aware**

- Do not rub the stained area when the stain is fresh or damp from the vinegar, as you may rip the document.
- Depending on the severity and freshness of the stain, blotting repeatedly with a vinegar-soaked paper towel instead of soaking may be effective for removal. When the stain has faded, blot with a clean, dry paper towel and dry as above.
- If the signature page at the end of a contract is the stained page, do not try to remove the stain. Blot dry and leave alone. The signatories may have used a fountain pen or a type of ink that is water soluble.

## **SPILL ON A PATRON**

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### **1 Apologize immediately.**

Even if the spill was clearly the fault of the diner, apologize. The apology must sound sincere.

### **2 Get club soda and clean napkins.**

The carbonation in club soda helps bring the stain to the surface, making for easier cleanup. Use on any stain except red wine or a red wine-based dish like Chateaubriand. If the stain is red wine, go to step 5.

### **3 Analyze the location of the stain.**

Helping in stain removal may not be appropriate, depending on where the stain is located and the sensitivities of the patron. Offer the club soda and napkins to another guest at the table and suggest that the guest assist the diner with stain removal in the restroom. If the stain is on a jacket, offer to take the jacket and work on the stain. (Most stains occur over the right shoulder, since drinks are served and cleared from this side.)

### **4 Replace the spilled beverage or food item.**

### **5 Offer to pay for dry cleaning.**

For a red-wine stain, you or the manager should offer to have the clothing cleaned at the restaurant's expense. You might also offer a complimentary dessert or bottle of wine on the diner's next visit.

## **FIX A BAD HAIRCUT**

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### **IF THE CUT IS UNEVEN**

### **1 Offer to make good.**

Explain to the customer that you can fix the haircut. Avoid offering a refund. If the client insists, offer several free hair-care products instead.

**2 Keep cutting.**

Unless you plan to offer the customer extensions or a hair weave, going shorter is the only way to even out the hair. Make sure you tell the client what you are doing. Say, "I'm taking a little more off the top here, just to even it out." Stop every few minutes and hold up a hand mirror to display the new length.

**3 Maintain a sense of humor.**

Say, "Didn't I tell you I specialize in asymmetrical haircuts?" If the client is still angry, try compliments: "You know, your hair looks great at this length. We should have cut it shorter a long time ago." Avoid getting defensive.

**4 Use camouflage.**

Hide the uneven cut by slicking back all the hair with a heavy, wet-look gel. The glare of the gel under lights or sunlight may make the short side difficult to see.

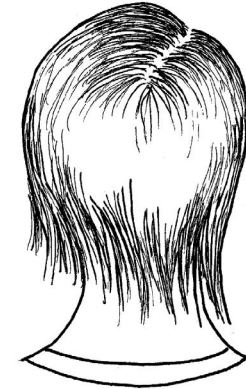
**5 Use the ears.**

An uneven section of hair can often be hidden behind one ear. Apply gel to slick the hair back and behind the ear, and a good dusting of hairspray to hold it in place.

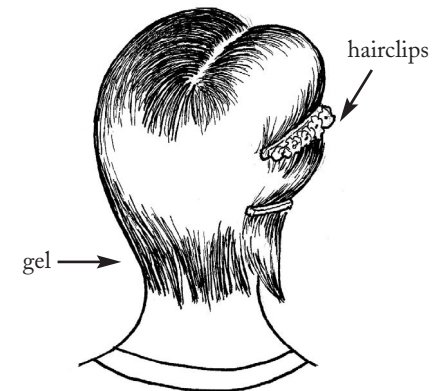
**6 Accessorize.**

Place a large hair clip on the shorter side to obscure your mistake. If the accessory will not cover the short section, put it on the longer side to attract the eye and draw attention away from the shorter side.

Before



After



*To hide an uneven cut, apply a heavy, wet-look gel. Hair clips distract attention.*

## IF IT'S A BAD DYE JOB



### Re-dye.

Using the ten-level system to classify hair color (1 is black, 3 is darkest brown, 5 is medium brown, 7 is dark blond, and 10 is very light blond, with all other colors falling somewhere in between), make sure the new dye color is no more than two levels above the natural hair color. If the natural color cannot be discerned, use the existing color as your baseline.



### Go brighter, not lighter.

Dye dark hair a bright color such as auburn, mahogany, or caramel. Any hair color above level 5 should never be given blond highlights.



### Apply a color glaze.

If the highlights are too light (too much bleach), use a conditioning color glaze to tone down the highlights, then re-highlight with a hair color. Avoid using more bleach at all costs.



### Go dark.

Light-colored hair—or any hair—easily can be made darker. Do not change the color by more than two levels (see step 1). If the hair has a damaged, orange hue, use a color with an ash tint to cut the orange.

## Be Aware

Many home coloring treatments are bad for the hair shaft and can damage follicles and cause hair to fall out. If you run out of professional hair color, make a

healthy substitute. For dark color, mix already brewed, damp coffee grounds with regular shampoo until the mix is the color you are seeking. Wash the hair normally and rinse well for a quick-and-dirty (but safe) dye job. To lighten hair, mix hair gel with standard iodine.