Bleeding your radiator

If your radiator in your house feel cold even when you have the heat on it means that your radiator may contain trapped air that's obstructing its normal flow. Luckily, this common problem is easily fixed. You just need some simple tools and to follow the below steps:

Diagnose your radiator. A radiator that needs bleeding has cool air trapped in its upper portions. Thus, when you turn on the heat, either the entire radiator will feel cold or the top of the radiator will feel cold while the bottom feels warm.

Find a radiator key. If you've decided to bleed your radiator your first step should be to find something to open the radiator's "bleed valve." Look for a small valve at the top of one end of your radiator. On this valve, there will usually be small square bit which can be turned to adjust the valve. Radiator keys, cheap metal implements designed for opening and closing radiator valves, are available at most hardware stores. Find a radiator key that's the correct size for your valve or, alternatively, search your tool chest for a small wrench or other tool that's the right size to turn the valve.


Turn off your heat. Ensure that your central heating is switched off before bleeding. Allow time for the heat in your system to dissipate, then feel all over your radiator for heat. If any part of your radiator is still hot, wait for it to cool completely before proceeding to the next step.

Open your radiator's valves. Next, place the radiator key over the bleed screw (it should fit snugly), slowly turn the key anti-clockwise for about half a turn. As the air releases, you'll hear a hissing sound

Catch drips from the valve. As air escapes from your radiator, water will likely sputter from the bleed valve. Hold a kitchen towel or cloth under the bleed screw to catch any drips. Alternatively, use a small bowl or dish.


Wait for water to squirt out of the bleed valve. When a steady stream of water (not a sputtering mixture of air and water droplets) squirts through the bleed valve, you've released all of the air trapped in your radiator. Re-tighten your bleed valve (turn the bleed screw clockwise) and ensure that there are no leaks. Use a rag to wipe up any water that's splashed around your radiator.

Check your boiler's pressure level. By releasing excess air from your radiators, you've lowered the overall pressure of your house's heating system. If the pressure's fallen too low, heat might not reach some of your radiators (especially ones on the top floors of your house.) To restore your heating system's pressure, it may be necessary to top off your boiler with water.