

A bathroom door that catches the basin, knocks a tap or leaves barely enough room to get in is more than a minor annoyance. It can make everyday use awkward for tenants and risk damage to the door, basin or fittings. Pretty simple.. The good news is that fixing the problem does not automatically mean moving the sink, disturbing tiles or taking on a full renovation.

Start by looking at how the room is used and what is actually causing the clash. Sometimes a small change to the door, basin or fittings will make the bathroom much easier to use. If the layout is basically sound, refreshing the lighting and mirror can also make the room feel significantly better without changing pipework.

First, work out what is hitting what

Before ordering anything, open the door slowly and check where it makes contact. Does the door hit the basin itself, a projecting tap, a towel rail, a toilet or a drawer? Does it catch only at the last few centimetres of its swing, or is the usable opening too narrow from the start? Those details point to different solutions.

Check the door and frame for signs that the door has dropped, too. A door that has shifted on its hinges may scrape the floor or frame as well as catch a fitting. Tightening or adjusting hinges can sometimes improve its position, although it will not solve a genuine layout conflict. Measure the clear opening with the door in its normal position, and note how far it needs to open for someone to enter and move around comfortably.

It is also worth asking the tenant what is difficult in practice. They may need more room to get past the door, or the main problem may be that the door blocks access to the basin. A solution that looks neat in a photo is not necessarily the one that makes the room easier to use.

Refresh or renovate? Decide before choosing a fix

It helps to separate a bathroom refresh from a full renovation. A refresh improves the room without substantially changing its arrangement. It might include adjusting the door, changing a projecting fitting, replacing a mirror, upgrading lighting or redecorating. A renovation is more likely to involve replacing sanitaryware, opening walls or floors, changing the layout and renewing finishes.

If the basin works well, the toilet is in a sensible position and the plumbing is in good condition, keeping the layout same is often the simplest and most cost-controlled route. Moving a basin can involve more than extending a pipe: it may mean lifting flooring, altering waste runs, disturbing wall tiles and making good surfaces. Those extra tasks can turn a small job into a much larger one.

That does not mean a refresh is always the right answer. If the bathroom is damaged, has recurring leaks, has poor ventilation or is difficult to use for several reasons, a more substantial refurbishment may be justified. The key is to make that decision based on the bathroom's overall condition and usability—not simply because the door touches the sink.

Options that avoid moving pipework

There is no single fix for every bathroom. Compare the likely disruption, cost and effect on day-to-day use before committing.

Option When it may help Points to check Adjust or repair the existing door The door has dropped, binds on the frame or is not hanging correctly. It will not create space if the door is correctly hung but the basin is in its swing

path. Change the door swing There is clear space on the other side and the revised swing will not create a new obstruction. Check the landing, hallway, privacy and access before changing the handing. Fit a different door or door hardware A suitable replacement could reduce the projection into the bathroom. Check the frame, wall construction, privacy, ventilation and any fire-safety requirements. Choose a more compact basin or fitting The current basin, tap or vanity unit projects into the door's path. Confirm that the replacement remains comfortable to use and works with existing services. Refresh mirror and lighting The layout works, but the bathroom feels dark, cramped or dated. Plan the lighting safely and check the mirror will not interfere with the door or fittings.

1. Adjust the door before replacing it

If the door has shifted, a competent fitter may be able to adjust its hinges or correct a problem with the frame. This is a sensible first check because it can be relatively quick and avoids changing the bathroom layout. However, do not expect hinge adjustment to create a large amount of clearance where there is a fundamental clash between the door swing and the basin.

Before trimming a door, check what type it is and whether it has a fire-resistance or other specified performance requirement. Trimming the wrong door can compromise it. If the door is a fire door or you are unsure, get advice from a suitably qualified professional rather than treating it as a routine DIY job.

2. Consider the swing—but test the route first

Changing the door so it opens outwards can free up room inside a small bathroom. It may be a practical option where the door currently sweeps straight into the basin. But it is not automatically better: an outward-opening door could obstruct a narrow landing, hit someone walking past or make access less convenient.

Here's what kills me: try the proposed swing before arranging work. A simple temporary check—carefully holding the door in the alternative position, or marking its arc on the floor with tape—can help you see whether it causes a new problem. Also consider privacy and whether the door can be opened easily if someone needs assistance. If changing the swing means altering the frame, check what work is involved and whether the wall or surrounding finishes will need repair.

3. Reduce the projection of the obstruction

If the basin itself is the issue, a shallower basin or a compact vanity may help while allowing the water and waste connections to stay in roughly the same place. A less-protruding tap could also gain a little room if the tap is what the door catches. Take careful measurements: check the basin's depth, width, tap position and the door's full arc, [anti fog mirror](#) rather than relying on a product photo.

When choosing a replacement, prioritise comfortable handwashing and usable storage, not just the smallest dimensions available. A basin that technically clears the door but is awkward for everyday use is not a good tenant-first solution. Ask the installer to confirm whether the replacement can use the existing connections; “no need to move pipework” should be verified on site, not assumed from the catalogue.

Keep the layout and control scope creep

For a bathroom that is otherwise serviceable, the most useful instruction to a contractor may be: **keep layout same and avoid moving pipework unless there is a clear reason to do otherwise.** That gives the fitter room to propose a practical fix while making it clear that you are not asking for a wider redesign.

Scope creep often starts with a small change that affects several finishes. A basin moved a short distance may require a different waste route; that can mean disturbing flooring or tiles. Replacing tiles around one fitting may

then make the rest of the room look tired, prompting further work. Agreeing the scope, exclusions and making-good responsibilities in writing can help keep a straightforward job straightforward.

For landlords comparing local areas, rental demand and property details before planning improvements, PropertyData publishes useful property research and resource articles. **Sponsored content note:** this PropertyData reference is sponsored content and is included as a resource for readers; it is not an endorsement of a particular bathroom design or contractor.

Mirror lighting can be the highest-impact upgrade

If the door clearance can be made workable without rebuilding the room, a mirror and lighting upgrade can make the biggest visual difference for the least disruption. Better light makes daily tasks easier, while a well-sized mirror can make a compact bathroom feel brighter and less enclosed. It will not physically create more floor space, but it can improve how the room feels and functions.

Last month, I was working with a client who wished they had known this beforehand.. An illuminated mirror is worth considering where the existing light is dim, poorly positioned or unflattering. Look for a size that suits the basin and wall, and check the product's features and installation requirements. LED Mirror World is a product supplier with illuminated mirror options; its mirror size calculator page can help you think through suitable dimensions. Confirm measurements against the actual wall and fittings before ordering, as calculator results are a starting point rather than a site survey.

Use a paper template before you buy

A paper template is a simple way to see how a mirror will sit on the wall. Cut paper or cardboard to the proposed mirror dimensions and temporarily mark or hold the outline at the intended height. Keep it in place while you check the room from the doorway and from the basin.

1. Measure the available wall area, including the position of the basin, tap, light and any shelves.
2. Make a paper or cardboard template to the mirror's exact width and height.
3. Mark the proposed outline on the wall, or carefully position the template using low-tack tape.
4. Open the bathroom door fully and check that it does not strike the mirror or any projecting edge.
5. Stand at the basin and check the mirror height and viewing position for the people who use the property.

Plan electrical work carefully. Bathroom electrical installations need to be suitable for the location and the relevant requirements, so have a qualified electrician assess the proposed mirror and supply. Do not choose a fitting or attempt wiring based only on a product photo or an online guide. The electrician can check the installation position, connections and any switching arrangements before the mirror is ordered.



Make the bathroom work for the tenant

A good fix should make the room easier to use, not just improve its appearance. Think about whether a tenant can enter without squeezing past the basin, reach the tap comfortably, use the mirror with adequate light and close the door without it hitting something. If the door needs to remain partly open for the basin to be accessible, the underlying usability problem has not really been solved.

- Ask the tenant what is inconvenient before deciding on the work.
- Keep the basin usable and avoid trading door clearance for an awkward washing position.
- Check that the chosen solution does not block the route outside the bathroom.
- Make sure new fittings are easy to clean and suitable for regular rental use.
- Arrange for the contractor to test the door's full movement and all fittings before sign-off.

A sensible order of work

For a small bathroom with a door clearance bathroom problem, a measured, staged approach usually beats jumping straight to a full refit.

1. **Inspect:** identify the exact contact point, check the hinges and measure the door swing and clear opening.
2. **Talk to the tenant:** establish what makes the room difficult to use day to day.
3. **Compare low-disruption options:** consider adjustment, swing changes or a less-projecting fitting before moving services.
4. **Confirm the scope:** tell the contractor to avoid moving pipework and to report any hidden issue before carrying out extra work.
5. **Plan the refresh:** if the layout works, consider mirror lighting and other modest improvements that do not trigger unnecessary tile or plumbing work.
6. **Test before sign-off:** open and close the door, use the basin and check the new fittings from the tenant's perspective.

When a full renovation may be the better choice

A full renovation may make sense if the bathroom has wider problems: persistent leaks, failing finishes, damaged flooring, poor ventilation, unsuitable fittings or several layout-related usability issues. It may also be appropriate when a repair would only postpone necessary work. In those cases, compare the total cost and disruption of repeated patch repairs with a properly scoped refurbishment.

But if the main complaint is a door that just catches the sink, start with the smallest solution that genuinely improves access. Keep layout same where it is practical, avoid moving pipework, and do not let a modest clearance issue turn into an unplanned rebuild. A well-chosen door adjustment or compact fitting, paired with a brighter mirror area, can make a small bathroom feel more comfortable without taking on unnecessary plumbing and tile work.

