



BATHROOM

QUICK FIX

Shower Enclosure Replacement

Working with sliding shower door replacements can be problematic where it concerns the bottom track. During some renovation projects, the track can be found to be welded to the tub, which can be tricky to address.

To remove, the first step is to lift the sliding doors off of the head rail track and swing them out. Remove the screws holding the head rail to the side rail. Tap the head rail loose from the side rails using a rubber mallet. The side rails are usually bolted and caulked in place. Remove the screws (use Liquid Wrench or just drill them out if they are corroded) and pry the rails away from the wall. Be gentle so as not to loosen any tiles.

Next, remove any excess caulk from the bottom rail. The bottom track typically is glued down to the tub with adhesive caulk. It may be possible to gently tap the side of the track with a rubber mallet and break the hold of the dried-out caulk.

Look for any screws that might be holding the track to the tub. If the track remains stuck, gently pry it with a flat pry bar, use a 3/8-inch plywood backer placed approximately 4 inches to 6 inches under the pry bar so you do not damage the tile or tub. Use a putty knife to remove remaining caulk or glue. Clean the area with acetone or other suitable cleaner.

Installation of the new shower doors is the reverse of removal. The bottom track may need to be cut to size. Use



polyvinyl adhesive caulk to attach the bottom track to the tub. Don't use screws; it will cause the tub to rust prematurely. Use plastic anchors for the side rails along with polyvinyl adhesive caulk. Re-attach the head rail and doors. Avoid using the shower for 24 hours to 72 hours thereafter. —G.A.

Scraping the Tub

Older bathtubs that were painted on the inside can create eyesores because of chipping and peeling.

Removing the old paint and applying a new coating is a good remedy.

Remove the old paint with a strong paint remover such as Strypeeze, a paste-type remover that clings to the sides of the tub. If epoxy paint was used, the project will be more difficult because this paint is tenacious, even when it is chipping.

Old tubs might contain lead, a health hazard. Before attempting removal, you should test the paint for lead. Test kits are available for about \$13. If the paint contains lead, check www.epa.gov/lead for guidance.

If you decide to proceed with the paint removal, read the directions and cautions on the remover container. Use plenty of stripper and give it time to work. When the old paint softens, scrape it carefully with a plastic scraper such as those used to remove ice from windshields.

It is unlikely that you will be pleased with the tub's finish after the paint has been removed—tubs in good condition are seldom painted. Epoxy paint, called tub-and-tile paint, is available at paint stores, home centers or retail sites online. An example is the Rustoleum Tub and Tile Refinishing Kit, available for about \$25. —G.A.

