Fix an appliance problem

Use AI to understand an error code and try simple, safe fixes, and know when it's time to call someone.



By the end, you'll be able to:

- give AI the make, model and error code
- try only simple, safe fixes
- know when to stop and call an engineer

Warm-up Which appliance lets you down?

Talk about it with your group. Washing machine? Dishwasher? Boiler? What happened?

1 Find the details

Error codes mean different things on different machines. Where would you find each detail? Write it in.

	Where to find it
The make (the brand)	
The model number	
The error code	
The instructions	

2 Ask AI

If you have a device, try this prompt, with a real make and model if you have one.

TRY THIS PROMPT

My washing machine is showing error code E21 and won't drain. The make is [make] and the model number is [model]. What does the code usually mean, and what simple, safe checks can I try myself? Please tell me when I should stop and call an engineer.

3 Safe or not?

Tick whether each is safe to try yourself.

	Safe	Not safe
Switch it off and on again		
Clean the drain filter, with towels down for the water		
Take the back off while it's plugged in		
Check the drain hose isn't kinked		
Keep using it while it smells of burning		

What would you do if an appliance smelt of burning?

4 Check the answer

An AI said this. Why should you be careful?

EXAMPLE AI ANSWER

Error E21 means the motor has failed. You'll need a new washing machine.

5 Good habits

- Give the make and model. Check the code in the maker's manual or website.
- Switch off and unplug before any check.
- Register your appliances with the maker, so you hear about safety recalls.

> **No device?** In pairs, look at a photo or diagram of a washing machine. Find where the model number and drain filter might be.

Find out more: read the free step-by-step guide, with a 10-second video, at **nosebleed.si/ideas/fix-an-appliance-problem**

Teacher notes: Fix an appliance problem

Time: 45 to 60 minutes

Level: beginners; no AI experience needed

Group: any size; works well in pairs

You'll need: a copy per learner; phones or tablets with an AI chat app (optional)

Before the session

Try the prompt with an appliance of your own. "E21" is used here as an example: codes differ between makers, which is the point of the lesson. Take care that learners don't do anything unsafe at home.

Running order

5 min	**Warm-up.** Appliance trouble.
10 min	**Part 1.** Find the details.
15 min	**Parts 2 and 3.** Try the prompt, then safe or not.
15 min	**Parts 4 and 5.** Check the answer; good habits.
5 min	**Wrap-up.** Simple, safe, then call.

Answers: Part 1

Make: on the front. **Model number:** on a label, often inside the door, on the back, or in the manual. **Error code:** on the display. **Instructions:** the manual, or the maker's website.

Answers: Part 3

Safe: off and on; the drain filter (switched off, with towels); the hose.
Not safe: the back off while plugged in; using it with a burning smell (switch off and unplug).

Answers: Part 4

The AI doesn't know the make or model, so it's guessing. On many machines, a drain error is something simple, like a blocked filter. Check the manual, try the safe checks, and get an engineer's view before buying a new machine.

Discussion points

- A burning smell, smoke or sparks: switch off at the wall and unplug.

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