The Untold Story of Toilet Paper

One of the worst feelings one can have is realizing too late that there’s no toilet paper in the bathroom. Toilet paper is a common item in our lives, but in fact, about 70to 75 percent of the population of the world doesn’t even use toilet paper. Modern toilet paper was only introduced in 1857 by an American called Joseph Gayetty. To find out what people used in the past, and what others still use today, we have to dig deeper into history.

Like many inventions, toilet paper was first conceived in China. The first recorded use comes from the sixth century. Almost any paper at that time could be used as toilet paper. Meanwhile, in other cultures, people made use of any substance that was handy. Water, leaves, and even snow were popular in temperate countries, while sand, fruit skins, even smooth stones did the job in dryer climates. Yet, water was and is the most popular cleaning agent around the world.

Some people might be curious about the way toilet paper is made. The process starts off with either new wood pulp or recycled materials. A huge cooker is used to turn the materials into fiber, which is then washed and chemically treated. The water is then drained off and the remains are pressed into a flat sheet that can be cut into long strips for rolls or square pieces for packs.

Though the whole subject of toilet paper might be a little disgusting, the statistics associated with it are fascinating. For example, nowadays we use between eight and nine pieces per visit and an average of 57 pieces of toilet paper per day. The stuff is also used to remove makeup, clean mirrors, and even to make dresses. It’s so useful that seven percent of American admit to having taken rolls of toilet paper from hotels!

Article from English Digest 2014/10