



Swimming Pool Maintenance

A Beginners Guide

Water Chemistry Basics

Maintaining the correct water chemistry is crucial for a safe and enjoyable swimming experience. Here are the key elements to monitor:

- **pH Level:** Aim for a pH between 7.2 and 7.4. This range ensures swimmer comfort and effective sanitisation.
- **Alkalinity:** Maintain alkalinity between 80 and 120 ppm (parts per million) to prevent pH fluctuations.
- **Sanitiser (Chlorine or Salt):** Chlorine levels should be between 1 and 3 ppm. Saltwater pools need a salt level of 2700-3400 ppm, as recommended by the generator manufacturer.
- **Calcium Hardness:** Keep calcium hardness between 200 and 400 ppm to prevent scaling and corrosion.

Test your pool water **at least twice a week** using a reliable testing kit or test strips. Adjust chemicals as needed according to the product instructions.

Regular Cleaning Routines

A consistent cleaning schedule prevents algae growth and keeps your pool sparkling. Here's a simple routine:

- **Skimming:** Remove leaves, insects, and debris from the water surface daily using a leaf skimmer.
- **Brushing:** Brush the pool walls and floor weekly to prevent algae and calcium buildup. Pay special attention to corners and steps.
- **Vacuuming:** Vacuum the pool floor weekly to remove settled dirt and debris. Use a manual or automatic pool vacuum.
- **Filter Cleaning:** Clean your pool filter every 4-6 months, or more frequently if the pressure gauge indicates it's necessary. Backwash DE and sand filters, and clean or replace cartridge filters.

Equipment Maintenance

Properly maintaining your pool equipment extends its lifespan and ensures efficient operation. Here's what to do:

- **Pump and Motor:** Inspect the pump and motor regularly for leaks, unusual noises, or vibrations. Clean the pump basket frequently.
- **Filter:** Monitor the filter pressure and backwash or clean as needed. Check for cracks or damage.
- **Heater (If Applicable):** Inspect the heater for corrosion or leaks. Clean the burner and heat exchanger annually.
- **Automatic Cleaners:** Check hoses and connections regularly. Clean or replace worn parts as needed.

Consult your equipment manuals for specific maintenance instructions.

Essential Safety Precautions

Safety is paramount when owning a pool. Here are vital precautions to take:

- **Supervision:** Never leave children unattended near the pool, even for a moment.
- **Fencing and Gates:** Ensure your pool is surrounded by a secure fence with self-closing and self-latching gates.
- **Safety Equipment:** Keep a first aid kit, life preserver, and reaching pole readily available near the pool.
- **No Diving in Shallow Areas:** Clearly mark shallow areas and prohibit diving to prevent injuries.
- **Electrical Safety:** Keep electrical appliances away from the pool and ensure all electrical connections are properly grounded.
- **Chemical Storage:** Store pool chemicals in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area, away from children and pets.
- **Drain Covers:** Ensure all drain covers are properly installed and maintained to prevent entrapment hazards.

Troubleshooting Common Problems

Even with diligent maintenance, problems can arise. Here's how to address some common issues:

- **Cloudy Water:** Test and adjust water chemistry, shock the pool, and ensure proper filtration.
- **Algae Growth:** Brush the pool, shock with chlorine, use an algaecide, and ensure proper filtration.
- **Stains:** Identify the stain type (organic, metal) and use an appropriate stain remover. Adjust water chemistry to prevent recurrence.
- **Foul Odors:** Test and adjust water chemistry, shock the pool, and clean the filter.

If you can't resolve the issue yourself, consult a pool professional.

Seasonal Considerations

- **Opening the Pool:** Thoroughly clean the pool, test and adjust water chemistry, and inspect equipment.
- **Closing the Pool:** Lower the water level, add winterizing chemicals, cover the pool, and protect equipment from freezing.
- **Winter Maintenance:** Periodically check the pool cover and water level, and remove any accumulated debris.

Summary

Maintaining an outdoor swimming pool involves regular water testing, cleaning, and equipment upkeep. By following these guidelines, you can ensure a safe, clean, and enjoyable swimming environment for yourself and your family. Remember to prioritise safety and consult with a pool professional for any complex issues.

If you are looking for pool maintenance services or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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