

Steps to Prepare Your Pool for Summer Use

While we cannot anticipate every circumstance, this section attempts to address the most common issues about pool opening. The more you know about opening your pool, the more you will enjoy your pool all season.

1. Remove the leaves from the cover. Be sure to remove leaves from the cover so they do not drop into the pool when you take the cover off. There are many tools to assist you in getting the leaves off the cover. A leaf skimmer or leaf net works well for light duty, or if there are a lot of leaves you may want to use a leaf vacuum.

2. Siphon or pump off the pool cover. The purpose of covering the pool during the winter is to keep it clean of debris and odor-free. Any stagnant water on top of the cover should be pumped away from the pool. Avoid letting the standing water get into the pool.

3. Remove, wash, dry, and store the pool cover. One step people often skip is washing the cover. You are about to store the cover away for an entire hot, humid summer. The last thing you'll want is to pull it out in September and find a musty, mildew mess. An easy way to wash the cover is with an 18" wall/algae brush attached to your vacuum pole, and a mild, effective pool cover cleaner. Wash all air pillows and watertubes as well. Allow them to dry in sunlight. Then, fold them neatly and store them in a safe, out of the way area for the summer.

4. Remove all winterizing plugs, plates, and gizzmos. Make sure to remove all winterizing plugs, plates and gizzmos covering the thru-wall skimmer and any of the thru-wall return lines. These are located on the inside walls of the swimming pool. If you own an in-ground pool, these lines should have antifreeze in them. Don't worry about antifreeze leaking back into the pool. Pool Antifreeze is non-toxic usually amounting to less than 6 gallons, which when mixed with more than 20,000 gallons of pool water will not impact your pool or its swimmers.

5. Chemically clean the filter. Chemically clean the filter if it was not chemically cleaned before closing for the winter. Filters should be chemically cleaned at least twice a year to operate efficiently during the swimming pool season. See the label on Filter Cleaner to properly chemically clean your filter.

6. Reconnect the filter, pump and motor. If you have a cartridge filter make sure all cartridges are clean before use. Close or cap the filter drain on the bottom of the filter tank. If there are any o-rings that belong in any of these connections, lubricate them with a non-petroleum-based lubricant before reconnecting. If you have a sand filter, make sure the filter is filled with the appropriate amount of White Filter Sand (usually half to two-thirds full). If you add more sand, rinse it before closing the tank. This will prevent the dust from going into the pool when you turn the filter on, clouding the water.

7. Reconnect any fittings. Fittings will need to be reconnected that were disconnected that were dis-connected between the pump, filter, motor, chemical feeder, automatic vacuum line, and heater (not all pools have chemical feeders, automatic vacuum lines or heaters).

8. Check the pool system. A full check of the pool system will need to be done to see that it works properly. Make sure the power supply to the pump is live, and turn on the motor, just for a couple of seconds, to make sure the motor itself is indeed working and not seized. Turn it off immediately. (Never run your pump and motor for extended periods without water running through it). If the motor appears seized, noisy, or does not work, you'll need to have it serviced immediately. Check the filter system and skimmer basket to see that they are working properly. Follow manufacturer's instructions for your type of filter. You should run your filter continuously for 48 to 72 hours initially for best results, or a minimum of 10 hours a day.

9. Fill the swimming pool. Fill the pool to the appropriate water level, which would be half way up the faceplate of the thru-wall skimmer.

10. Clean the water line and remove leaves and other debris from the skimmers, pool water, surface and bottom. Should there be a waterline ring around the pool, now is the time to attack that, using rubber gloves, a good scrubber (stronger than a sponge but not as harsh as steel wool) and Concentrated All Purpose Cleaner. Brush the walls and steps especially if algae are present.

11. Reinstall the ladders, stairs, railings, diving boards, slides, and other entrance accessories.

12. Turn on the pool filter and vacuum the pool. If you have a DE filter system, you will need to add diatomaceous earth to the filter (according to the filter label instructions) as soon as you turn on the system.

NOTE: Try not to manually vacuum a lot of leaves. Leaves can clog the vacuum hose, skimmer and filter baskets, and pool filter. A heavy concentration of leaves should be removed with a leaf vacuum.

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Test your pool weekly and more often when there is excessive rain, evaporation or greater bather loads than usual. It is easier to maintain a perfect pool, than to bring it back to perfect after it has been neglected for even a short time.

A well-maintained clean, clear and sparkling pool will give you a season of healthy active fun for the whole family.

If you have followed these instructions, reviewed your pool and pool equipment manufacturer's manuals and the recommendations of your pool sanitizer, your pool should be ready for swimmers.

It is important to catch any change in your pool water before it become a problem. Test your pool water weekly. Test more often if you have excessive rain, evaporation or bather loads.

A clean, sparkling pool is a healthy, fun pool. Enjoy!

Add the appropriate start-up chemicals in this order:

1. Concentrated Mineral Remover

This chemical is usually the first thing you need to add to the pool. This will need to circulate for 12 to 24 hours before you add any other chemical. In areas of high mineral content, we recommend adding two doses, filtering for 12 hours between doses.

2. Alkalinity & pH Test

You need to test your pool water for alkalinity and pH (not the same thing). First, bring the alkalinity to a level of 100 ppm. Generally, one pound of Total Alkalinity will bring 7,500 gallons of pool water up 8 ppm. Run the filter for at least 4 hours before adding any other chemicals. Your pool water's pH should measure between 7.2 - 7.6 and should be brought into range by adding pH Rise or pH Lower. Run the filter for at least 4 hours before adding any other chemicals.

3. Concentrated Shock

Now is the appropriate time to shock your pool. One pound of Powdered Shock properly treats 10,000 gallons of pool water. Circulate the pool water for at least 4 hours before adding any other chemicals.

4. Concentrated Algae

Every swimming pool should be treated with an initial dosage of concentrated algacide at this point. You should use algacide routinely all season long to prevent algae growth and build-up, as directed on the container. Note: If you use a biguanide product, or if you have a gunite or concrete pool, do not use an algacide with a copper-based active ingredient as it will stain your pool.

5. Sanitizer

Now you can finally begin using the sanitizer of your choice. If you choose to sanitize with unstabilized chlorine, or stabilized chlorine your stabilizer (cyanuric acid) level should measure between 30-50 ppm. Your pool water may be brought within this range by adding Stabilizer and Conditioner. This will greatly increase your chlorine effectiveness by reducing chlorine loss from the sun's ultra-violet rays.