

Swimming Pool

Pool types: Pools are available in two types, above ground and in-ground. The type of pool can determine the amount and kind of cleaning methods.

Pool materials: Pools come in a variety of different materials, some requiring more maintenance than others.

- Fiberglass is used for a one-piece tub fitted into a pre-dug hole. The slick surface repels algae, but it will need occasional re-coating.
- Concrete is covered with a plaster water seal that can take more wear and tear than other pool materials. It'll probably need to be replaced every 7 to 10 years.
- Aggregate finish is a concrete pool with a specialized finish that has better traction. It's covered with a layer of embedded rounded gravel.
- Tile is a concrete pool with a tile finish instead of a plaster finish. The tile surface requires less surface maintenance than other surfaces.
- The slick surface of a vinyl liner, like fiberglass, repels algae.

Pool problems: How much your pool is used will help determine the amount of cleaning needed. For instance, murky or colored water may mean you have chemical imbalances, pollutants such as microorganisms, or a clogged filter. Clogged filters can mean money down the drain.

Algae can be another spoiler. It needs to be attacked two ways -- through chemical treatment, and a lot of filtering, backwashing, scrubbing, and skimming. Whether it is green, brown, or little black spots of algae, it will take over your pool if it is not dealt with immediately.

Features: Pools can have several features that can affect your cleaning job. Many larger pools have heaters, especially those installed in cooler climates. Many homeowners turn off the heater in the warmer months to save on the utility bill. Your filtration system keeps the water clean. Improper chemical balances open the door to contamination, therefore it is also advisable to use a water testing kit. It gives a good indication when you need temporary treatment, and when a pool service professional is needed.



Some manual pool covers are designed for safety to keep kids out of the water in case they slipped on the edge. Winter covers can also lower your heating and chemical use. It's a nice feature to keep leaves and bugs at a minimum.

An automatic pool cover is just like a manual pool cover, except a machine rolls it back and forth along tracks. There is more to cleaning a pool, however, than keeping a proper pH balance. Not only is there skimming for floaties, but also vacuuming; scrubbing the tiles, sides, and floor; and cleaning, maintaining, emptying, and backwashing the filter and pump. A professional pool cleaning service will give you many clean, clear hours free of scale, rust, pollutants, bacteria and cloudy water. (But it is up to you to watch for that occasional leaf.)

If you own an outdoor pool in a climate that gets cold during the winter, many experts strongly suggest you winterize your pool. Winterization usually entails draining most of the water, blowing out the pipes, applying algacide and antifreeze in key areas, and covering the pool. Winterization will protect your pool from any freeze damage that can harm your pool surface and equipment