

Pool Maintenance Tips

1. Maintain Equipment

The Pressure Gauge is an **extremely important, overlooked,** measuring tool. Too often pool owners will “over back-wash” their pool because they think it keeps the pool cleaner. This is not a good practice and just wastes water. If the Pressure Gauge is missing or not functioning, replace it immediately.

- When changing the position of the Dial Valve Head **always turn the pump off first** and turn the dial clockwise.
- Establish what the pressure is when the filter is clean (generally in the range of 7 – 15 psi)
- When the Pressure Gauge reads 20 psi or higher it is time to backwash the filter (typically once per week).
- Back-wash for a minimum of 3 to 5 minutes and make sure there is enough water in the pool to perform this.
- After back-washing, place the valve in the “Rinse” position for about a minute before going back to “Filter”.
- There must be enough sand in the filter to provide cleaning action. Sand should be changed every **5 years**.
- Keep the pump and skimmer baskets clean from debris. An extra pump basket is handy to have around - just replace the dirty one with the clean one and let the dirty one dry. Once dry it cleans out very easily. Never bang the skimmer or pump basket on the ground or the deck ... this will crack and break them.
- Lubricate any rubber seals and O-rings with silicone grease. **NEVER USE Vaseline!**
- For a secure leak-free connection, use Teflon Tape on all threaded connections.



2. Maintain Water Circulation

- Running the pump 24 hours per day is ideal for the best water filtration and circulation.
- The return jets should be in place and pointed in a **downward position (45°)** to promote more effective circulation. You may think that pointing them out straight looks better but it actually impedes the water circulation.
- Allow your pool water to breathe by leaving the solar blanket off for periods of time. It should only be applied at night to hold in the heat that has accumulated throughout the day.



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3. Professionally Service the Heater

Pool heaters typically require the least maintenance of all pool equipment. Gas heaters can work fine without being serviced for a couple years, and electric ones can last even longer. Consult your manufacturer's manual for specific care instructions. Sometimes calcium scale builds up inside the tubes of a heater and restricts flow, preventing the water from heating adequately. If this happens, recruit the help of a professional because the heater may need to be disassembled to have its tubes cleaned out with a wire brush or acid. Hiring someone to service your pool can cost \$100 or more per month, depending on the maintenance your pool requires.



4. Check and Maintain Water Level

A lot of water will be lost throughout the swimming season due to evaporation, backwashing, swimming, splashing and exiting the pool. When you remove debris with your skimmer net during the week, it's also a good time to check the water level. Ensure it doesn't fall below the level of the skimmer, otherwise the pump could be damaged. If the water level is low, use a garden hose to bring it up.

If you drain your pool to perform maintenance or once the swimming season has passed, be careful to not let the pool sit empty for too long. As a general rule, it's best to leave water in a pool throughout the winter because the weight of the water counteracts the forces from the ground pressing up against the pool from below. Less chance for pool damage!



5. Find and Repair Leaks

Sometimes it's difficult to determine if low water levels are due to evaporation or a leak. You can discover leaks in your pool by conducting a simple bucket test. Fill a plastic bucket three-quarters full of water. On the inside of the bucket, mark the water line. Place the bucket in the pool, then mark the water line on the outside of the container. (If the bucket has a handle, remove it to allow for better stability while floating.) Let it float for two or three days. If the water inside and outside the bucket has gone down the same amount, your pool is losing water due to evaporation. However, if the pool water level has gone down more than the water inside the bucket, your pool has a leak. That's your cue to call Starling to have it fixed.



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