

Weekly Pool Maintenance Steps

1. Skim Debris and Clean out Skimmer Basket

Skimming the pool's surface by hand every few days is one of the fastest and easiest ways to keep your pool clean. Floating debris will eventually sink, becoming harder to remove. Use a long-handled net called a hand skimmer or leaf skimmer to remove leaves, bugs and other unwanted items. Skimming significantly increases the efficiency of the pool's circulation system and lowers the amount of chlorine you'll need to add to your pool. Cleaning out strainer baskets at least once a week also helps circulation and lowers chlorine demands. Locate strainer baskets attached to the side of aboveground pools and in the pool deck of inground pools. Simply remove the plastic basket and shake it out; spraying the inside with a hose can help with stubborn objects.



2. Vacuum the Pool and Brush Walls and Tile

A pool should be vacuumed every week to keep water clear and reduce the amount of chemicals you need to add to it. There are many types of pool vacuums. If you have a manual design, work it back and forth all over the surface of the pool like you would if vacuuming carpet. It's good form to slightly overlap each stroke. Check the skimmer basket and sand filter each time you vacuum, and clean them if necessary.

Vacuuming isn't the only maintenance that should be done once a week. Brushing the walls and tile helps minimize algae buildup and calcium deposits so they don't fester and become larger problems. The material your pool walls are made of dictates what kind of cleaning tools you should use. Select a stiff brush for plaster-lined concrete pools and a softer brush for vinyl or fiberglass walls. For tiles, use a soft brush to prevent scratching or degradation of grout. A pumice stone, putty knife or a half-and-half mixture of water and muriatic acid can also work well on tiles.



3. Clean the Pump Basket & Backwash Filter

Your pool filter collects fine debris and microscopic particles to keep the water clear. The pump should run at least 8 - 10 hours per day. Proper maintenance will ensure optimal performance. Locate the strainer basket on the pump and remove any debris at least twice a week. For cartridge filters, the cartridge element can be removed and cleaned by pressure washing inside and out with a garden hose. If cleaned regularly, the cartridges should last one to two pool seasons depending on pool usage. Sand and D.E. filters must be backwashed periodically to rid them of clogging dirt and debris. Backwashing reverses the water flow through the filter and directs it to the bottom of the tank, up through the filter media. This will flush accumulated dirt and debris out through the waste line. The general recommendation is to backwash your filter when the pressure reaches 10 psi over the initial start-up pressure. This usually means backwashing when the pressure reaches 20 psi or greater.



4. Test Water Regularly

Another tip to keeping your swimming pool clear is maintaining the proper chemical levels. It is very important to test your water regularly for two key factors: pH and sanitizers. By testing your water at least three times per week with test strips, you will begin to understand how bather load, weather (rain and sun) and chemical applications affect pool water. A water test should be brought into the store for testing every 2-3 weeks. Regular tests and balancing of pH, sanitizer and other levels will ensure crystal clear water all season long.

