

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR ABOVE GROUND POOL INSTALLATION

Preparation

It is possible to install your above ground pool yourself. With a little time and effort, you can save a lot of money. Once you've planned for and purchased your above ground pool package the next step is to actually install the pool. These tips and tricks will make for a smooth installation:

Gather Your Tools Before You Start

You should have the following tools on hand. Anything you don't have you can borrow from a friend or rent from your local hardware store:

- Tape measure
- Level
- Shovel
- Rake
- Trowel
- Phillips head screwdriver
- Wrench (5/16 and ¼)
- Duct tape
- Sand (use very fine sand that is easily compacted)
- Filter
- Skimmer
- Patio blocks (2" x 8" x 16") are not necessary but can make the installation easier
- Transit (rent this)
- Sod remover (rent this)
- Shop Vac

- Drill

Check Your Pool Package to Ensure You Have All the Pieces

Check your pool package materials against the materials listed in the instructions to ensure you have all the pieces before you get started. Call Pool Supplies Canada immediately if you are missing anything.

After you have opened and counted the hardware packets to ensure you're not missing anything organize and sort everything so you have it on hand. Don't mix the different sizes of nuts or screws, or drop or lose any pieces.

The Ground Work

Ensure the Ground is Level and Prepare It for Construction

Part of proper pool planning includes choosing the area for your pool and obtaining the permits to install your pool. Once that has been completed the next step is to ensure the ground is level. This is a critical step to ensure your pool is structurally sound and safe.

To make sure your ground is level you can either:

- Rent a transit from your local hardware store or equipment rental outlet.
- Use a long, straight board with a carpenter's level on top of it to measure the levelness of the area.
- The entire area should be within 1 inch of being perfectly level.
- If the ground is not level dig down any high areas (don't build up low areas) to prevent the pool from settling over time.

Once the ground is level you need to take measurements before starting construction:

Find the center point (where the middle of your pool will be). Use an existing object (like the wall of your house) and measure the area and mark where the edges of the pool will go. Measure half the width (the radius) of the pool from the marked edges. This is your center point. Mark the center. Use a soft measuring tape to measure around the perimeter of the pool. Measure the outline of your pool using the radius mentioned above so you have a guideline for construction. Add one foot to the measurement and then mark the ground around your center point, following the pool shape and measurements given in the instructions. Use stakes to mark the ground.

Remove sod and rake the area:

Pools can't be installed on grass. The grass will rot and affect the pool liner. Plus, grass can shift or settle over time, making it unstable. This means you need to remove the sod from the marked area. Rent a sod remover from your local hardware store or equipment rental shop to make this job easier. Once you've dug up the sod you need to rake the area to remove any remaining grass, roots, rocks or other debris (all of which can negatively affect the liner). Check that the area is level again. This is such a critical step it's important to check everything is level over and over again throughout the installation process.

Tips for Preparing the Ground:

- If the ground is clay use a floor pad for the installation.
- Oval buttress free pools require additional room at the sides for the ungrounded leg supports.
- You can not install an oval pool on concrete.
- Don't install a floor pad on a dished pool because the floor pad is designed to lay flat.

- You can not dish an oval pool if it has strapping.
- The pool must be level across the perimeter.

Construction of Your Above Ground Pool

Build the bottom ring:

Follow the instructions that come with your above ground pool package as each type, brand and size of pool have different instructions. In general, you will be using your plates, stabilizers and rails. Here are some tips to identify each piece:

- Your plates will be made of metal or resin
- The bottom stabilizer should be crimped on one side. It has smaller rails
- The bottom rail is straighter and larger than the stabilizer.
- Lay out the pieces and assemble as instructed. Generally, you will be sliding the bottom rail into the bottom plate up to the dimple on the plate.
- Remember to measure the bottom track in several locations to ensure that the pool is truly round and the correct size. If the size is correct, stake the ring into position. If not, contact Pool Supplies Canada immediately. On oval pools make sure diagonal measurements match (see your pool diagram for these measurements). Double and triple check the diagonal measurements and keep doing this over and over.

Support your base:

Once your ring is in place you will need to add support for the base of your pool to keep it stabilized and level over time. This involves:

- Levelling each plate to within ½ inch of each other.
- Using patio blocks under each bottom plate. (not required) Place the block in the ground so the track is flush on the ground and level in all directions. If you choose to use patio blocks, make sure they are perfectly level and flush with the ground. All patio blocks must be flush with the ground, solid and level with each other in all directions.
- Remove one bottom rail so you can fill the area with sand. Mark the connecting bottom plates so that you can place them back in the right spot after you have filled the area with sand.
- The amount of sand you will need will depend on the size of your pool. Usually between 1 – 6 yards is enough.
- Replace the bottom rail and spread the sand evenly across the pool area.
- Don't spill sand on the bottom rails. If you do, be sure to clear sand or stone dust from the bottom rails otherwise the wall will buckle.

You've completed the hard part! The next step is to assemble and install the pool, following the manufacturer's instructions. If you have any questions about your instructions contact the experts at Pool Supplies Canada.

Tips to Install the Pool Wall:

- As you unroll the wall put the top plates on to help support and give the pool strength.

- Make sure the skimmer cut is on the top portion of the wall.
- **If your pool has buttresses:**
 - Make sure gaps are tight along the wall where the buttresses are.
 - On oval pools the first buttress that you install will be the reference to install the remaining buttresses, therefore ensure that measurements and placements are exactly where they need to be.
- Use stakes around the pool to hold the wall up while you are installing it.
- If you find that the wall hasn't aligned properly once you have finished placing the wall tracks in the bottom plates, then adjust the bottom rails of the plate (moving them in or out) to ensure they fit properly. Do this evenly throughout the pool if needed.
- Don't skip any nuts or bolts or your pool will not be stable.
- Staggered wall bar systems don't have pre-attached bars. Connect the bars yourself using the nuts and bolts provided.
- Wall bars must not touch each other.
- Build a 6-8-inch cove along the inside of the pool wall. The cove is an important part of the pool structure. Take your time to make a complete, full-sized cove.
- Pack your cove. Be careful not to scratch the pool wall when you're doing this. You can use a trowel.
- If the pool wall is floating, there is probably dirt in the track. To correct this issue, lift the wall and use a shop vac to clean it out. If you can't lift the wall you might have to disassemble the pool structure to correct this.
- **If your pool has strapping:**
 - Ensure that the straps raise higher in the middle. This may require you to put a little more stone dust underneath. If you fail to do this the straps will lift when the pool is filled with water.
 - On oval pools the strapping may begin to float. To troubleshoot this problem, check all measurements to ensure the pool is built correctly. Secondly ensure you raised the straps by 0.5 inches in the centre.
 - Do not be alarmed if you are not using all of the holes in the strap end channels.
- If holes do not align, DO NOT drill holes! Verify the alignment of the structures. If the holes are still not aligning stick a screwdriver through two of the holes to help line up the ends of the wall.

Installing the Pool Liner and filling

Tips to Install the Pool Liner:

- Be careful not to tear the liner during installation.
- You must install the liner on a warm, sunny day and check to ensure the evening temperature doesn't dip too low.
- Lay the liner in the sun for a few hours before you start so it is easier to lay out. Liners are usually slightly

smaller than the pool's support structure and it will stretch more easily when it is warm out. You should not install a liner on a cold day or fill the pool with very cold water once the liner has just been installed.

- Wet the sand and then rake it before putting the liner in the pool. This will ensure a level base
- Do not step on the liner with your shoes on. Install it either barefoot or in socks.
- Make sure you don't track any rocks into the pool with you while you are walking on the liner to work the wrinkles out.
- Work all the wrinkles to the outside of the pool.
- Once the stabilizer rails are installed you can take down the landscaping stakes.
- This is the last chance you have to ensure the bottom of your pool is level and free of debris
- Do not trim off the excess liner. If the liner ever needs to be removed, trimming the liner will make re-installation very difficult. Instead, roll up any excess liner and tape it in place near the top of the pool wall.

Tips for Different Types of Liners:

- Snap Bead liners snap into a separate track around the pool and are installed on top of the pool wall.
- V-Bead liners require no coping. The stabilizer rails will hold this liner in place.
- Unibead liners can be used as either a Snap Bead or a V-Bead liner. It comes as a V-Bead but you can remove the top portion to make it a Snap Bead liner.
- Overlap liners are hung over the pool wall. These are securing using plastic coping strips.

Tips for Installing Plates, Rails, Covers:

- Follow manufacturer's instructions carefully. The pieces should all fit together easily.
- Check to ensure the sides and top are level.
- Make sure the top plates are perfectly straight using a level before you tighten them.
- Bottom rails must always be held in place in the bottom plate.
- You must recheck the gaps at each and every one of the bottom rails so that they are all equal in gap size.

Tips for Filling Your Pool

- Fill the pool half way first and then install the skimmer and filter according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Install the safety warnings because your warranty could be voided if you don't add these labels.
- Apply the safety warnings before filling your pool to the top.
- The water level should be one third to half way up the skimmer.

If you have any questions, concerns or need assistance contact Pool Supplies Canada to speak directly to one of our pool installation experts.

With these steps you are now ready to install your own [Above Ground Pools](#)

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