

FIBERGLASS SWIMMING POOL CARE – A FIELD GUIDE

**I have a new fiberglass swimming pool, what do I do
now? What do I need to know?**



Introduction

Owning a fiberglass swimming pool is a great experience for everyone that gets the joy of jumping into, playing or lounging in one. And while it will be a great journey of ownership it does not come without some maintenance and upkeep requirements on your part. As a fiberglass pool owner there are some best practices that should be considered once your very own pool project has been installed and is ready for you and your family to enjoy.

We created these best practices to help guide you when getting started on your journey of pool ownership. The guide has three main components that include a high-level break down of swimming pool circulation and filtration, pool water chemistry and the best ways to clean your fiberglass pool properly.

Swimming Pool Circulation and Filtration Systems

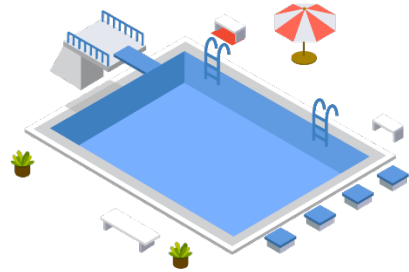
There are many core components that make up your fiberglass pool's operational system. When it comes to healthy swimming, the most important part is the circulation and filtration of the pool's water. Without proper filtration and circulation, you will find that you are spending more time and money maintaining your pool's chemistry than needed.

Proper water circulation assists in keeping the water clean and healthy. Your pool's pump helps to circulate water throughout the pool by using the pool's jets. The water is then filtered to clean debris and other harmful materials from the water, to then be recirculated once again. It is a great system, but like most pool components it needs proper maintenance to ensure proper functionality.

When it comes to water circulation, we recommend running your pool's pump for twelve hours a day when using a traditional single speed pool pump. If using a traditional pump, it is best to run the pump during the day. We recommend this because this is when algae are most active and algae bloom during daylight hours. If your system uses a variable speed pump you should operate the pump based on the manufacturing specs for 24 hours (recommended).

This will fully guarantee that you are optimizing your pool system's hardware, without sacrificing efficiency and cost.

The filtration system is important because it helps to remove particulate matter from the water. When filters get dirty the water's flow rate slows down which has a direct impact on the pool's circulation. This usually means more work for the pump and less flow output for the pool's circulation needs.



There are many different types of water filtration systems, but one thing remains consistent and that is that backwashing the fiberglass pool's filtration system will ensure your pool is operating at optimum levels and efficiency.

When it comes to your pool's water level it is important to know precisely where the water level should be. By maintaining a proper water level, you can help extend the life of the pump and filtration systems. Maintaining proper water levels will also ensure that your fiberglass pool shell stays vibrant.

Water levels are constantly changing. Water evaporates from the sun, heat, and atmospheric exposure. Water can also be removed from splash-out. This occurs from jumping in the water and from getting in and out of the water. So, it will be important to replenish your pool's water to the proper level on a regular basis. Mark a line at a good level on your skimmer and make sure your water is always close to that line. Best practice is to keep a water level at the middle of the skimmer or higher.

It is also important to understand your water replenishment source. Most people use water from the hose. You can test this water to determine a baseline of the water. Use an advanced test kit or have your local pool store test the water to determine metals and hardness. This will help you understand how your replenishment source effects your pool's water chemistry, so that you can be prepared with the correct chemicals to correct the water's chemistry.

For your swimming pool to function correctly it needs to establish a pressure that optimizes the pool's hardware, when circulating and filtering the water. This can be impacted by the water level as well as the cleanliness of the pool's filtration system. The pressure gauge tells you what the pressure should be in your pool system's environment.

The pressure gauge is important because it can be an indicator of potential issues in the circulation and filtration system. Too low and the system will not circulate enough water to keep the water clean. Too high and the system is working harder and less efficiently to circulate the same water. Once you establish your pool systems pressure you should monitor it to ensure proper circulation and filtration. Become familiar with a rise in pressure that may indicate the need to clean the filtration system.

Pool jets help to circulate the water by moving water from one part of the pool to another. It may not seem like a big deal, but it is also important to position your jets the right way. You should direct your jets downward. This will force any debris to circulate upwards. This will also provide a better mix of water circulation and filtration from the bottom to the top. By forcing the water upwards, you will also help to move the cold water towards the surface, providing a more even temperature experience for the pool's users.



Skimmer baskets provide a frontline defense for the filtration system.

Fiberglass pools typically use skimmers to assist in the filtration of your pool's water. Skimmers are great for leaves and other debris large enough to gather in the skimmer. While this a great feature of the skimmer baskets, they can also become clogged with debris, thus having a negative impact on the operational efficiency of your pool system. If you live around trees, and/or your pool is exposed regularly to other forms of debris you may need to clean the skimmer basket daily.

Pool Chemistry and Balancing

Balancing your swimming pool's water is as the word implies a balancing act. Balancing your pool's water is important for two reasons. One, it helps ensure that your pool's water is safe for you and your family to swim in. And two, it helps ensure the longevity of your pool's hardware. The hardware designed to operate your fiberglass pool expects to be used in specific ways. Deviations from that can cause your pool's system to have issues or fail to operate correctly.

When establishing a baseline for your swimming pool's water it will be important to establish the proper alkalinity. The water's alkalinity level helps to maintain the water's pH levels. Your pH levels are important because they determine the proper range for safe swimming, while eliminating harmful particles that can live and grow in the water.

When establishing the alkalinity in your pool's water you will want to be in the range of 80 - 120 parts per million (PPM). An alkalinity increaser chemical product can help to keep your levels where they should be. Use Pool Ninja Pros Sensei Alkalinity Increaser to effectively manage your pool water's alkalinity.

Once you have established your pool water's alkalinity you will want to focus in on getting your pH levels in the right zone. Like traditional pools fiberglass pools require a pH range of 7.2 to 7.6. However, we recommend keeping your pH on the lower side to minimize calcification build up on the fiberglass shell. Use Pool Ninja Pros Dropkick Down pH- or Uppercut pH+ products to manage pH levels.

Now that the base for your pool's healthy water has been established, you need to add a sanitizer to help maintain the pool's ability to kill harmful bacteria and algae that can propagate in dirty or unkept water. You want a form of sanitizer, typically chlorine, to help you achieve this goal. When using chlorine as a stabilizer, you will want to keep your levels between 1 - 3 parts per million (PPM). When it comes to chlorine, more is not better, so be cautious of overusing chlorine-based products.

One way to avoid the over or under use of chlorine is to utilize an automated consistent delivery system. If your pool system does not utilize an automated chlorine delivery system, then create one of your own incorporating a manual process. As you begin to manage the

water chemistry of your pool you will begin to understand the relationship between the various pool chemicals and how they can function together to make for an optimal bathing experience in your pool.

Regardless of how you manage your pool's chlorine intake you should test the water regularly and adjust, as necessary. Use Pool Ninja Pros NinjaChlor, Sake2Ya Oxidizing Shock and SnapShock products to manage your fiberglass pool's chlorine levels.

90% of your pool chemistry is handled by your alkalinity, pH and chlorine levels. The other 10% are specialty related products aimed at enhancing the total swimming pool experience. Products like Pool Ninja Pros Black Belt Algae Repellent and Black Belt Algae Takedown, or other algaecides and water clarifiers help achieve greater results for a healthy pool. Pool Ninja Pros also offers VIBRANZ, which is a pool care system specific for fiberglass pools.



Pool Cleaning and Basic Maintenance

Keeping your pool clean is a fundamental part of owning a pool. There are certain steps you can take to minimize the effort needed to maintain a clean pool, but at the end of the day you will always have some level of involvement when it comes to maintaining a pool properly.

One of the most basic, yet extremely effective tools to have in your pool care Ninja kit is the pool skimmer net. This tool allows you to clean the surface of the water by skimming the surface of the water collecting floating debris from the water's surface. It is important to skim the water's surface regularly to keep debris free from clogging the skimmer. Use your skimmer net as needed to remove debris.



Next you will want to incorporate some sort of system for vacuuming the pool's walls, floor, and ambient water. Vacuums can be useful because they can help clean all areas of the pool's water and the walls that contain the water. When you vacuum your pool, you are helping to keep the water clean from debris that can affect the filtration system's ability to circulate the water. You also help to remove plants, leaves and other particles which promote algae growth.

If you want to limit the time required for pool cleaning, then you should consider a robotic cleaner. The newest robotic cleaners work very well and can help make caring for your pool a whole lot easier. There are many great brands, and each has features and options to keep your pool looking great.

When it comes to a fiberglass pool there should be little need to use a brush. However, it is possible that a scum line can develop around the surface of the pool where the shell meets the water line. This scum line is caused by oil-based products used by humans on their skin and in

their hair, that enters the water, and which can harbor bacteria and algae. Use Pool Ninja Pros ShellBright or other cleaners poured onto a magic eraser or light duty sponge and wipe away. It is that easy and if you have the same problem with your skimmers use the same method to clean them as well.

It is important to establish some sort of cleaning and maintenance schedule for your pool. How you determine this will depend on several criteria which include:

- How is your pool being used?
- By whom and how often?
- Climate can affect the cleanliness of the water, such as wind, rain, and snow. Do you have a plan for weather related events?
- Do you have a system in place to reduce exposure to trees, sand, bugs, and other debris?
- Are you using a pool cover as a layer of protection?

Perhaps the most important aspect of keeping your pool system healthy is consistency. Be consistent and test your pool's water with a drop test kit. Clean your pool's water daily, weekly and/or bi-weekly as needed.

Conclusion

Keeping your pool clean, healthy, and operating efficiently requires a holistic approach to maintaining your pool. We broke this approach into 3 main components so that each can be addressed in the correct light.

We broke down the core principles of water circulation and filtration, basic fiberglass pool chemistry and how to keep your pool clean from debris and other harmful materials that can cause damage to your swimming pool.

With our approach it is not just about clean and balanced water, although that is the main objective. It also includes the overall pool system functionality and how to best maintain that system, which will ultimately determine how well and long your pool lasts. Your fiberglass pool is an investment and should provide you, your family, and friends years of fun times. To protect that investment, you will need to implement some best practices to your pool care regimen but in the end, it will be worth the time and effort spent.

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