

Pool Cleaning and Accessories

Cleaning your pool

Keeping a pool clean is a combination of two important procedures - purifying the water and removing any surface debris such as leaves and other stray matter. As no-one wants a dirty pool, the cleaning regime is very important and here are some ways of making the job quick and simple.

Manual cleaning tools, such as long handled leaf scoops and skimmers, brushes and underwater vacuum cleaners, come high on the list of functional accessories. The simple procedure of attaching a manual vacuum cleaner to a telescopic handle and a flexible vacuum hose through the skimmer allows you to clean the pool in virtually the same way as you vacuum your carpets indoors. However, these may have little to contribute to the aesthetics of your pool, but regular use does much to keep your pool clean and in tip-top condition.

Automated systems minimise the amount of time and effort required to keep your pool in good condition and contribute only a fraction of the overall cost of a pool installation.

There are three types of automatic cleaners found in domestic swimming pools; suction, pressure and low voltage electrical cleaners. The first two types work hydraulically with suction cleaners using the power of the pool's own filter pump, while pressure cleaners have a separate electric pump to boost water pressure.

Electric cleaners are self-contained, with an integral filter and although they are powered from the mains electricity supply, this is generally reduced to 24v via a safety device.

Although very safe, the pool should not be used when these cleaners are in the water. Other than for aesthetic reasons, or when there is likely to be particularly heavy pool use, both suction and sweeping cleaners are designed to be left in the pool and are also completely safe.

Suction cleaners are simple to install and are powered by the existing filter pump and plugged into the skimmer box. Acting rather like an underwater vacuum cleaner, the unit travels up the walls and across the floor. It travels in a random pattern, with the suction unit in contact with the surface of the pool lining. Dirt-laden water and debris is carried through a flexible hose into the pool filtration system.



Large particles are caught by a basket in the skimmer box or the pump, while finer material passes through to be removed by the filter unit. Because they are linked to the filter system, these cleaners will switch on automatically when the filter begins to operate. Although there are a number of machines on the market, all work on the same principle. Some use oscillating valves to create a mini shock wave, another has a diaphragm, a third utilises a turbine driving two wheels, while yet another employs four vibrating sticks which propel the unit along.

Pressure cleaners require an independent pump and motor and must be professionally installed. They can be operated via a time clock, or turned on manually when the pool needs cleaning. The water from a booster pump drives a turbine which drives the cleaner randomly round the pool. The debris is then normally collected in a silt back attached to the unit, which has the advantage of not blocking the pool filter. Coarse dirt is caught in a bag above the machine, while fine debris is blown away to the main drain by a rear sweeping hose.

Electrical self-contained cleaners look rather like a small bulldozer and this type travels around the pool on 'tank-tracks' deriving its power from an internal low voltage electric motor. An internal vacuum pump sucks water into the unit which filters the dirt out by passing through a cartridge type filter, or a gauze bag. The machine travels randomly about the pool covering the floor and walls until its task is completed. This type of cleaner is also only used when the pool is unoccupied.

Each type of cleaner offers generally similar results with the choice depending upon your specific requirements and budget. Please ensure that you check if the pool cleaner that you wish to use is designed to clean either the floor and/ or the walls.



Pool accessories

There is more to enjoying your pool than simply plunging in and wallowing in the luxury of its crystal clear water. There are dozens of products on the market, some more essential than others, designed to make your bathing an even more enjoyable experience. Such products range from the functional to the purely decorative and some being both.

Further assistance to bathers entering or leaving the pool is offered by a wide selection of pool ladders suitable for in-ground and above ground pools. Usually constructed of stainless steel or epoxy resin coated aluminium, ladders can be fixed or hinged allowing them to be pivoted out of the water when not in use.

A word of caution - If you are thinking of using your pool for diving, it is vital that you discuss this in detail with your SPATA contractor during the planning stage, as many pool designs are not suitable. The safety of divers must be a paramount consideration.

All pools require an edging of coping stones or edge tiles which are both comfortable to sit on and provide a hard-wearing and practical finish to the immediate pool surround. Beyond the coping stones, tiles, paving or wooden decking might provide an appropriate surround for sunbathing or sitting around chatting to friends and family.



Underwater lighting is an important safety feature in all types of pools; it can also be highly decorative, but its prime function is to illuminate the pool at night, so that the floor is clearly visible. It is even possible to link the light to a sound system producing underwater lighting displays, timed to accompanying music or atmospheric soundtrack.

Children, in particular, love pool slides and your home pool can be equipped with any one of a wide range of straight and curved models moulded from polyester and fibreglass.

Poolside furniture and barbecues help you to get the most out of warm summer days and balmy evenings, while decorative statues and urns can be the perfect way to finish off your pool installation.

