



PLASTER POOL

Start-Up Instructions

Much has been written about how to start-up a newly plastered pool, so we'll try and simplify it as much as possible and still hit the important points.

A start-up procedure is typically a one-month process of caring for a new pool plaster finish after the pool is filled with water. During this time, you'll need to test your water regularly, adjust and maintain the chemical balance, and brush the pool at least twice a day to remove the plaster dust.

Plaster starts the curing process once it is mixed with water and will achieve almost 90% cure during the first month. That is why this initial treatment is so important. You should have on hand a good quality test kit along with a telescopic pole with a brush and a net.

A few things of note regarding the start-up before you get started:

- Never mix water into chemicals, add chemicals to water.
- Do not shock the pool until the start-up is complete.
- Do NOT use the pool heater until ALL the plaster dust has been removed.
- Do NOT use any wheeled device like a pool sweep or a vacuum during the start-up period.
- Do NOT add salt (if your pool uses salt) until the start-up process is complete.
- Do NOT allow anyone or pets into the pool before it's filled (no skateboarding – seriously, it's happened).

FILL DAY

The plaster crew will place a hose at the bottom of the pool and turn on the water. It is critically important that you do NOT stop the fill process until the water has reached the middle of the skimmer. If your pool has a spa, move the hose to the spa after the pool is filled. Do not add additional hoses or use the fill line. Once the pool (and spa) are filled, start the filtration equipment. Test the *fill* water and record the results.

DAY ONE

How you treat the water will be determined by the chemical make-up of your fill water so the following recommendations may have to be adjusted based on your local water source.

Test the pool water for pH, Total Alkalinity, and Calcium Hardness and record your results.

High Total Alkalinity should be adjusted to 80 ppm to 100 ppm using pre-diluted Muriatic Acid (31% - 33% Hydrochloric Acid) in small doses. Always pre-dilute the acid by adding it to a five-gallon bucket of pool water.

Low Total Alkalinity should be adjusted up to 80 ppm using Sodium Bicarbonate (baking soda). The pH should be reduced to between 7.2 and 7.6 by adding pre-diluted Muriatic Acid if the Total Alkalinity is within the 80-100 ppm range.

Brush the entire pool surface, from the top of the walls down, starting at the shallow end and ending at the deep end. Setting your skimmer valve so most of the suction is from the main drain will help remove the plaster dust more quickly. Brush thoroughly twice per day to remove all plaster dust. Brushing your pool finish at least twice a day is one of the best things you can do to maintain the gorgeous appearance of a pool finish. Remember, wheeled devices should not be used in the pool until after the start-up is complete.

Although optional, it is highly recommended to pre-dilute and add a quality sequestering agent using the recommended initial start-up dosage and then the recommended maintenance dosage per the sequestering agent's manufacturer. This is cheap insurance against metal staining.

Initially, operate the filtration system continuously for a minimum of 72 hours. DO NOT add Chlorine for 48 hours. DO NOT turn on pool heater until there is no plaster dust remaining in the pool.

DAY TWO

Test pH, Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness and repeat the steps of the 1st day except for the addition of the sequestering agent.

Once the Total Alkalinity is adjusted to 80 ppm to 100 ppm and the pH is adjusted to 7.2 to 7.6, then adjust Calcium Hardness levels to a minimum of 150 ppm. CAUTION: Adjustments requiring more than 20 lb. of Calcium Chloride should be pre-diluted and added in 10lb increments – morning and afternoon.

Brush the entire pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to remove all plaster dust. ***Again, routine brushing is critical to a long-lasting, beautiful pool finish.***

DAY THREE

Test pH, Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness and make adjustments based on the first day parameters as necessary.

Pre-diluted Chlorine may now be added to achieve 1.5 to 3 ppm. No salt should be added until the start-up is complete.

Brush the entire pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to remove all plaster dust.

DAY FOUR THRU THIRTY

Test pH, Total Alkalinity, Calcium Hardness and Chlorine and adjust as necessary.

After the 4th day, Calcium levels (if low) should be adjusted up slowly over the start-up period not to exceed 200 - 400 ppm.

After the 4th day, adjust Cyanuric Acid (stabilizer) levels to 30 to 50 ppm based on the primary sanitizer you will be using (pre-dissolve and add through the skimmer).

On the 7th day, if there is any plaster dust remaining, you can remove it using a **brush** pool vacuum.

After ten days, **if** there is no plaster dust remaining, you can turn on the heater.

AFTER 30 DAYS

You can now install the pool sweep and add the salt if your pool uses a salt system.

You should maintain your water balance and Chlorine levels through testing and adjustments throughout the life of the pool; this is the surest way to protect your investment. Periodic brushing is also recommended.

Regular daily care will reduce the likelihood of problems with the pool surface. Allowing the water chemistry to fall out of balance can lead to leaching, etching, scale formation, and discoloration.

Disclaimer:

These procedures are based on sound technical swimming pool industry practices but are only general guidelines. Each pool is different and should be approached as such. Local swimming pool supply stores are an excellent source of information and there are many quality pool service companies who can provide start-up as well as ongoing pool service.

And as always, feel free to contact our office or your field superintendent with questions or concerns.