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Above Ground Pool Manual

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO ABOVE GROUND POOLS

Small above ground pools are an excellent form of enjoyment for children (and adults) throughout the summer period. Although they are relatively inexpensive to purchase and straightforward to put up, a lot of people are daunted by the chemicals needed to maintain the pool.

The most important thing to remember is that you DO NOT need to be a chemist to look after a pool. You just need to acquire a little knowledge of what you need to use and why to ensure the pool can be used in a safe and enjoyable environment. This guide will provide all the knowledge you need when running an above ground pool.

Why do I need chemicals?

Before you start using any chemicals it is important to gain an understanding on why you need to use chemicals.

- Chemicals kill any bacteria or viruses that get into the water so they do not multiply and cause infections in bathers.
- Chemicals prevent you from emptying and re-filling your pool all the time.
- Chemicals help maintain the clear and sparkling look that you get when you first fill it.

Chemicals provide a clean, safe and comfortable bathing environment for all bathers!

What chemicals do I need to use?

There are several types of chemicals that you will come across when looking after your pool. These are listed below and will be discussed in detail throughout this guide.

- **Chlorine** – Kills any bacteria or viruses that get into the water.
- **Shock Treatment** - Used periodically to break-up impurities that accumulate in the pool water.

- **Water Balancers** – Keeps the water in balance and comfortable to bathe in.
- **Algaecides** – Responsible for preventing algae appearing in the pool.
- **Flocculants** – Help keep your water looking clear and sparkling.
- **Test Kits** - Helps you to keep the right levels of chemicals, protecting both anyone using the pool and the pool itself.

The filtration system

Adding chemicals alone will not be enough to provide sufficient care for your pool water. You also need to ensure that your pool circulation and filtration system is working efficiently. The majority of above ground pools work in the same way and consist of a pump and filter unit. The pump circulates the water around the pool whilst the filter removes any debris or suspended particles which could cause the water to turn cloudy if left in the pool. The filter unit normally contains a filter cartridge which should be taken out and cleaned regularly.

Please consult your manufacturer's pool manual for details on your filtration system.

Health and safety

The final and most important part of the introduction process is to know some basic health and safety guidelines for handling chemicals.

1. **NEVER mix chemicals**. When adding chemicals add them one at a time and dissolve them in a bucket of warm water before adding to the pool. Once the chemicals are in the water they are fine. **Never add water to chemicals always add chemicals to water**.
2. Keep wet hands and dirty scoops out of your chemicals. Contamination is often a cause of problems.
3. Don't store pool chemicals where other materials can fall into them.
4. Use gloves and safety glasses.
5. Make sure chemicals are locked away from children.

Pool volume

Rectangular

Max. Length x Mon. Width x Ave. Depth

L	x	W	x	D	x	6.23 galls
L	x	W	x	D	x	1.0m³

Oval

Max. Length x Mon. Width x Ave. Depth

L	x	W	x	D	x	5.54 galls
L	x	W	x	D	x	0.89m³

Round

Diameter x Diameter x Ave. Depth

L	x	L	x	D	x	4.89 galls
L	x	L	x	D	x	0.79m³

L = Length W = Width D = Average Depth

The size of my pool is:.....galls/cu mtrs

CHAPTER 2: CHLORINE

Now you have been introduced to the world of chemicals it is now time to start your pool up. If you have already used your pool prior to using any chemicals you need to go to the shock treatment section (chapter 3) in this booklet. If you are just about to fill your pool up then you need to add some chlorine.

How does chlorine work?

When chlorine enters the water it forms an active sanitiser and oxidiser known as "free chlorine". The free chlorine is responsible for killing bacteria and other unwanted pollutants that enter the pool water.

The free chlorine level should be between 1 and 3 parts per million (ppm).

Maintaining a sufficient level of free chlorine in the pool water is vital to ensure the water is safe to bathe in.

What type of chlorine should I use?

Stabilised Chlorine is predominantly used on small above ground pools as it contains a stabiliser called cyanuric acid which prevents the chlorine being broken down by the sunlight. There are several ways in which you can dose the stabilised chlorine into your pool water depending on what budget you have and how much work you would like to do.

Stabilised 20g Chlorine Tablets

The recommended way to dose your pool is with 20gram tablets and a floating dispenser. You can either use standard **Stabilised 20g Chlorine Tablets** or **Multifunctional 20g Tablets** which contain an algaecide and a flocculant as well as the chlorine. This enhances the clarity of the water and also assists in preventing algae forming.

By using any form of stabilised 20g chlorine tablet you have the peace of mind that you are providing a constant dose of chlorine at all times and hence reducing the amount of work you have to do in order to look after the pool.

Dosing Stabilised 20g Chlorine Tablets or Multifunctional 20g Tablets

- Fill the floating dispenser with tablets.
- Fully open the blue ring at the bottom.
- Place the dispenser in the pool and leave it to float around.
- The rate of dissolution can be controlled by opening and closing the blue ring at the bottom.
- When the pool is in the use the dispenser is taken out and put into a plastic container well away from the children.

As a general rule if your chlorine reading is towards the latter end of the scale (3ppm) then only have the blue ring open a little and if it is towards the lower end of the scale (1ppm) then open it up more.

Stabilised Chlorine Granules

If you are on a tight budget you can use stabilised chlorine granules (sodium dichloroisocyanurate) which is a granular form of chlorine that requires manually dosing. You can either use standard **Stabilised Chlorine Granules** or **Multi-5 Chlorine Granules** which contain an algaecide and a flocculant as well as the chlorine. This enhances the clarity of the water and also assists in preventing algae forming.

Please note that if you are using Stabilised Chlorine Granules you will need to be more vigilant with the chlorine level to ensure it remains within the recommended range. You may also need to dose the pool regularly to cope with the demand for chlorine.

Dosing Stabilised Chlorine Granules or Multi-5 Chlorine Granules

- Filling a clean plastic bucket with pool water and adding the required amount of granules to the bucket.
- Once this has been thoroughly stirred distribute it around the pool spreading it around as much as possible making sure it reaches all areas of the pool.

10 grams will increase the chlorine level by 1ppm in a 1,000 gallon pool.

Top tips for using chlorine

- Maintain a chlorine level between 1 and 3 ppm.
- If possible use Multifunctional 20g Tablets and a dispenser to ensure the best water quality.
- Always dissolve any granular chemicals in a bucket of water before adding them to your water.
- If using a dispenser remove it when the pool is in use.

CHAPTER 3: SHOCK TREATMENT

What is a shock treatment?

A shock treatment is a boost of chlorine that should be done once a week during the summer or if the pool has problems with algae. You should also do a shock treatment if the pool has been used prior to adding any chemicals. If the pool is used a lot (during holiday periods) and is cloudy at the end of the day it is a good idea to shock it so that it can recover over night

What should I use as a shock treatment?

For above ground pools it is recommended that you use **Stabilised Chlorine Granules** or **Multi-5 Chlorine Granules** as a form of shock treatment. The aim of the shock treatment is to increase the chlorine level by approximately 5ppm to kill any impurities in the water.

Shock Dosing Procedure

- If you are using tablets and a dispenser remove this from your pool and place in a bucket.
- Fill a clean plastic bucket with pool water and add the required amount of granules to the bucket.
- Once this has been thoroughly stirred distribute it around the pool spreading it around as much as possible making sure it reaches all areas of the pool.

It is recommended that you don't enter the pool until it has return to below 5ppm

50 grams will increase the chlorine level by 5ppm in a 1,000 gallon pool.

What do I do if my pool goes green?

If your pool goes green you have two choices.

1. Empty and clean the pool before refilling and treating with chlorine.
2. Shocking the pool with chlorine and filtering the dead algae out.

A very green pool could need as much as 150grams per 1,000 gallons.

The amount of chlorine needed to clear a green pool depends on how green the pool is. However it is better to overdose a pool with chlorine to ensure all the algae is killed.

If you do not use enough chlorine you will only kill a small amount of the algae and the remaining algae will multiply rapidly using the nutrients from the dead algae and you are back to square one.

All pools are more prone to going green in adverse weather as algae spores and dirt are washed into the pool. To combat this, consider using a debris cover when it is raining.

Top tips for shock treatment

- Use stabilised chlorine granules or multi-5 chlorine granules.
- Shock treat your pool once a week at a time when it is not likely to be used
- Always dissolve any granular chemicals in a bucket of water before adding them to your water.
- Always allow the chlorine level to return to 1-3ppm before returning to the water.

CHAPTER 4: PH

Along with the chlorine level, pH plays an important role in providing a comfortable bathing environment in your pool. The pH scale runs from 0 – 14 with 7 being neutral. Anything above 7 is considered alkaline and anything less than 7 is considered acidic. In the context of pool water 7.2 – 7.6 is the recommended level to bathe in.

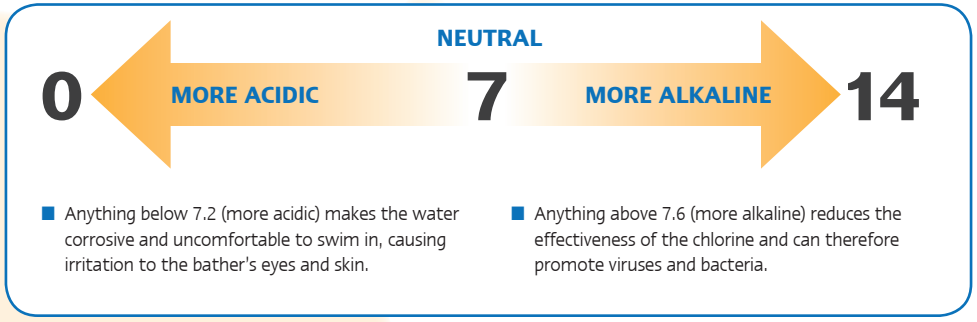
- **Anything above 7.6 (more alkaline)** reduces the effectiveness of the chlorine and can therefore promote viruses and bacteria.
- **Anything below 7.2 (more acidic)** makes the water corrosive and uncomfortable to swim in, causing irritation to the bather's eyes and skin.

Altering the pH Level

To alter the pH add 45g per 1,000 gallons.

To increase the pH level add **pH Increaser**
To reduce the pH level add **pH Reducer**

- Dissolve the required amount in a bucket of pool water and distribute around the pool with the filter pump running.
- Retest after 4 hours.



- Anything below 7.2 (more acidic) makes the water corrosive and uncomfortable to swim in, causing irritation to the bather's eyes and skin.
- Anything above 7.6 (more alkaline) reduces the effectiveness of the chlorine and can therefore promote viruses and bacteria.

CHAPTER 5: WATER TESTING

Testing your pool water on a daily basis is crucial to provide a clean, safe and comfortable bathing environment for all bathers. When testing the pool water you are testing for

Chlorine

Reason for Testing: To ensure there is enough chorine in your pool to provide a safe swimming environment.
Recommended Level: 1-3ppm
Level too Low: Open the collar more on your floating dispenser or add stabilised chlorine granules
Level too High: Remove the floating dispenser from the pool and do not add anymore chlorine. Remove the pool cover and chlorine will come down on its own.

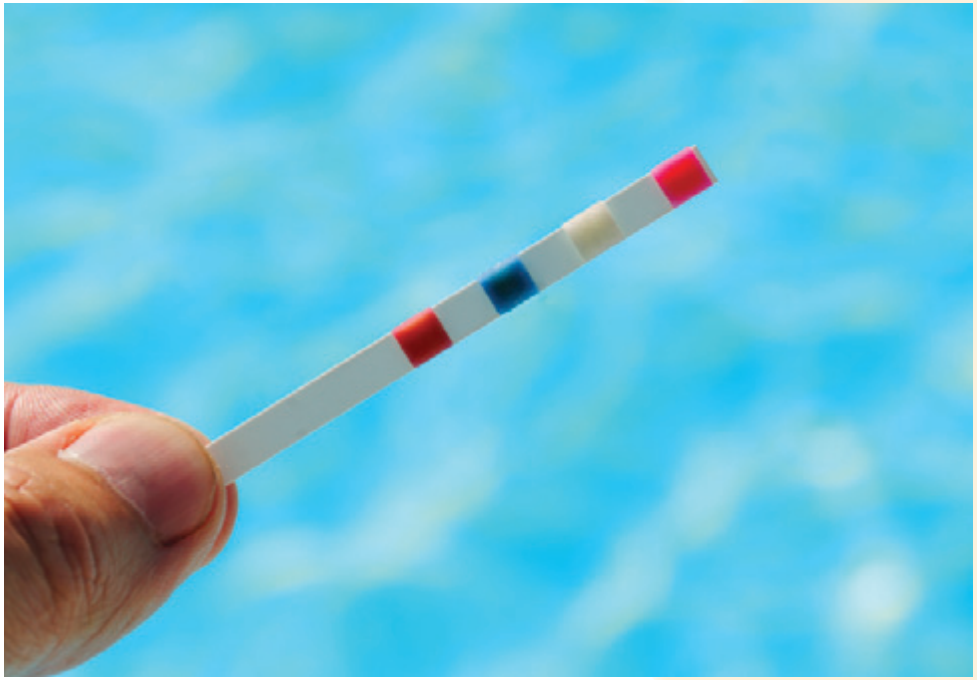
Please see chapter 1 for more information on dosing chlorine.

pH

Reason for Testing: To allow the chlorine to work to its full potential and provide comfortable bathing conditions for the bather.
Recommended Level: 7.2-7.6
Level too Low: Add pH Increaser
Level too High: Add pH Reducer

Please see chapter 2 for more information on dosing pH Increaser and pH Reducer.

Other test parameters include Alkalinity and Stabiliser (Cyanuric Acid). The Alkalinity level is not very important on above ground pools but if you are experiencing low levels of alkalinity add a small amount of Alkalinity Builder. If your alkalinity level is too high then it can be reduced using the pH Reducer.



As above ground pools are only up for the summer the stabiliser level will not reach a level that will cause concern. In the unlikely event that it does all you need to do is replace a portion of the pool water with fresh tap water.

How do I test for these?

When testing, it is important to have a testing method that is both accurate and reliable. For above ground pools a straightforward testing method such as test strips or a pool tester kit is more than sufficient.

Test Strips

Test strips are a popular method of testing the water in above ground pools due to the fact that they are quick and easy way to obtain accurate results. AquaChek test strips are renowned as one of the worldwide leaders in the test strip industry.

The general testing procedure is

1. Dip your strip into your pool water and remove immediately.
2. Wait 15 seconds.
3. Compare the colour pads to the colour chart on the bottle.

Pool Tester Kits

An alternative way to test your pool is with a test kit. A test kit normally consists of a clear container split into two sections, one for chlorine and one for pH. Each section is filled with pool water and then a DPD 1 tablet is added to the chlorine section and a Phenol Red Tablet is added to the pH section. Once added the water will change colour and this is then compared to the colour chart on the front of the container to obtain your chlorine or pH level.

Testing Tips

- To get the best out of your test strips, store them in a low humidity environment at room temperature.
- Keep wet fingers out of the bottle to enable accurate results when testing.
- Do not use any test strips that are out of date.
- Keep a record of your results, as they can be an excellent reference point when talking to dealers or professionals. They also help you to understand what is going on in your pool or spa.

CHAPTER 6: OTHER CHEMICALS

Algaecide

The main misconception surrounding algaecide is that it removes algae from the pool when in fact it only prevents it developing in the water. Maintaining a sufficient level of chlorine in the water is the only effective way of keeping algae at bay however if the chlorine level is allowed to drop or the chlorine is not working to its full effectiveness then algae can form.

Adding **Polyquat Algaecide** on a weekly basis will help prevent algae forming. If you are using Multifunctional Tablets or Multi-5 Chlorine Granules then the algaecide is included so a weekly does of Polyquat Algaecide is not required.

If you do experience a problem with algae then shock treat the pool with chlorine (see chapter 3) and then add a larger dose of algaecide.

To prevent recurrence add 10mls per 1,000 gallons of pool water on a weekly basis.
To treat established algae shock the pool with chlorine to remove the algae then add 100ml per 1,000 gallons of pool water.

Flocculant

Although the filtration system is designed to filter out any debris, some finer particles can pass through the system and consequently cause your pool water to look cloudy. Adding **Sparkle Water Clarifer** will help combat this as it collects all the fine particles and clumps them together to enable them to get caught in the filter.

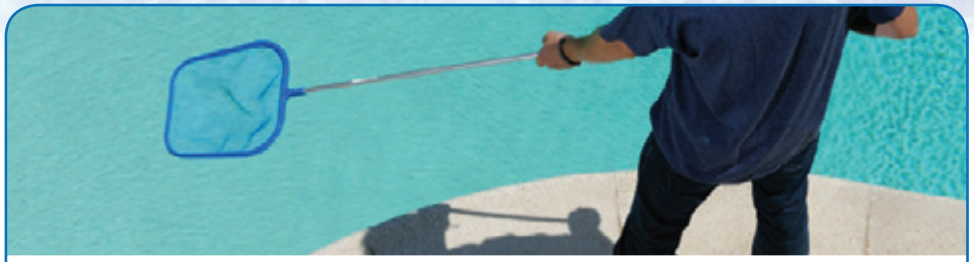
If you are using Multifunctional Tablets or Multi-5 Chlorine Granules then the flocculant is included so a weekly does of Sparkle Water Clarifier is not required.

To clear cloudy water add 25ml per 1,000 gallons of pool water.
To maintain water clarity add 6mls per 1,000 gallons of pool water on a weekly basis.

Alkalinity Builder

The alkalinity level is not crucial on an above ground pool however if it does get to low you can add some **Alkalinity Builder** and if it gets to high you can add some **pH Reducer (Dry Acid).**

CHAPTER 7: TROUBLESHOOTING



Problem	Cause	Solution
Green pool	Algae in the water and on the sides of the pool	Shock treat the pool with stabilised chlorine granules (see chapter 3) and brush the sides of the pool.
Cloudy Water	Low sanitiser level	Shock treat the pool then maintain a chlorine level of 1-3ppm
	Build up of suspended solids	Add Sparkle Water Clarifier (see chapter 6)
	Ineffective filtration	Check the filtration system is working properly and clean the filter cartridge. Check that there is not a hole in the filter cartridge Fit a new filter cartridge Run the pump for longer recommend 8 hours per day
No chlorine	Low sanitiser level	Add more chlorine (see chapter 2)
	Too much chlorine bleaching the test reagent.	Make a solution of 50% tap water and 50% pool water and then test again. If you get a reading then double it to get your actual level.
High chlorine level	Overdose of chlorine	Remove the pool cover and do not add any more chlorine. The level will come down naturally over time.
		Add dechlorinator to remove the chlorine instantly.

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