

# Pool Care



**Rainbow Quartz**  
*Your pool, your colour, your choice*

## To Commission Your Pool - The First 6 Weeks

### Filling the Pool

Your pool builder or renovator should advise you when to start filling your newly plastered pool. Should you intend to use any water other than normal mains scheme water, make sure you mention this as the water may require special chemical treatment.

First attach a sock, pillowslip or similar material to the end of the hose in order to diffuse the stream of water. Without this protection it is possible to damage the new pool plaster. Place the hose outlet in the deepest part of the pool. Then fill the pool without stopping, until the water reaches the recommended level - usually the middle of the tile line.

Do not turn off the tap while the pool is being filled, as dust and oils on the water's surface may leave a mark on the pool plaster which is difficult to remove. Finally, don't forget the tap is running so you are ready to turn it off when the pool is full.

### Water Balance

Your pool builder / renovator will usually arrange the initial start-up of your pool, so please take advice from them on the running of the filter and associated equipment. Once the system is running it is important to have the water tested regularly and to keep a record.

You can maintain the pool and chemical balance by yourself or in conjunction with your local Pool Supply Shop or a Pool Maintenance Professional.

The water in your pool contains various minerals and compounds. A proper balance is required to ensure sanitisers are effective, swimmers are safe and your expensive equipment is protected. The four key variables are discussed below. They are:

- pH (the measure of alkalinity / acidity)
- Total Alkalinity (TA)
- Calcium Hardness
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)

Each of these variables affects the others so 'Balanced Water' can only be achieved by balancing all of the factors together. As the pH level changes, this can alter the alkalinity and vice versa. So don't panic if you can't achieve the exact recommended level, aim to always have the measures within the suggested range.

## Recommended Chemical Levels are as follows:

Total Alkalinity	80 to 160 ppm
pH	7.2 to 7.6
Calcium Hardness	200 to 300 ppm
Chlorine level	1 to 2 ppm

## Brushing of the pool surface

With a freshly plastered pool, initial care is very important. Plaster dust is a result of a chemical reaction between the cement and water during the initial four week curing period and occurs in all plastered pools. The pool walls and floor should be brushed every day for the first four weeks and once a week for the next two weeks. This will remove and prevent plaster dust settling on the interior surfaces.

Thereafter, brushing the pool walls regularly - say once a fortnight in summer and once a month in winter - will help keep the Rainbow Quartz finish in tip top condition. If you can't do the initial brushing, you could request a service from your local pool maintenance professionals.

## When to add Salt and Start the Salt Chlorinator

Rainbow Quartz recommends running the system using chlorine only for the first 6 weeks. In week 7 add the salt and switch on the salt water chlorinator. There is no hard and fast rule as to when salt should be added (some plaster manufacturers say week 5 and others say after 3 months) but we believe 6 weeks of curing time is ample to protect the pool plaster from any effects.

When adding the salt to your pool, make sure to have the pumps running, spread it all around and agitate with the pool brush until dissolved. Remember, lumps of salt left sitting on the plaster surface may cause stains.

## Warranty

The warranty period is for one year from the date of plaster application against defects in Rainbow Quartz where the pool has been maintained to the relevant Australian Standards as demonstrated in a monthly water condition record from an appropriate testing service. The warranty does not cover faulty workmanship and is limited to the replacement of the defective product. The coloured Aggregates carry our exclusive 7 year fade resistance warranty.

Please [download](#) and print out the Pool Care Guidelines

# Keeping Your Pool in Great Shape - Week 7 Onwards

## Regularly Test & Balance

If you develop the routine of testing and balancing your pool water on a regular basis, you will enjoy years of trouble free ownership and swimming. When water gets out of balance, it could damage the plaster finish either by directly attacking it or by depositing unwanted and hard to remove minerals on the surface.

Refer to the *Recommended Chemical Levels* for concrete pools and to the *Tips When Adding 'Stuff' to Your Pool* in these guidelines.

## Keep on Brushing

Just because the Rainbow Quartz plaster has fully cured now, does not mean you should never brush your pool again. Nothing cleans walls better than a good old fashioned brush down and many steps and swim ledges are never visited by your automatic pool cleaner. We suggest a quick brush down once a week in summer and maybe once a month in winter. Start at the steps and work your way down the walls, finish in the deepest part. Naturally the pump and filter are running while you brush.

## The Water Chemistry Explained

**pH** is the relative measure of acids and basic ions in the water. pH is measured on a numbered scale from 0 - 14. The neutral point is determined as 7 (pure water). Any less and the water is acidic, any more and the water is alkaline.

The pH scale is logarithmic. This means that a change in pH of just 1 unit is a change of 10 times in acidity or alkalinity. Now you can see that 'close enough' is not good enough when it comes to maintaining the correct pH level. If your pool returned a pH reading of 5 it is ten (10) times as acidic as a pool with a pH of 6 and one hundred (100) times as acidic as a pool with a pH reading of 7.

The ideal pH level for a swimming pool is slightly alkaline at 7.4. You should strive to maintain pH in the range 7.2 - 7.6. The pH level in a newly plastered pool will tend to rise in the first 6 weeks so you should test regularly and add small amounts of acid (say 500ml) to balance. If you need to add larger quantities of acid, try several small doses over a few hours and make sure to dilute first and spread it around the whole pool. If you simply tip the acid in at the steps for example, because it is heavier than water, it will go straight to the bottom and damage the plaster finish.

**Alkalinity** is thought by many to be the most important variable in maintaining the correct water balance. Total Alkalinity (TA) measures all the alkaline chemicals in the water e.g. Bi-carbonates and carbonates. TA is expressed in parts per million (PPM) with a preferred range for pools between 80 - 160. The ideal level is 120.

If the TA level is in the ideal range, the pool environment is more stable and you will be better able to keep pH levels where you want them. Therefore you should always check and

adjust TA before adjusting pH. High TA can also contribute to scale forming on the surface and on equipment.

**Calcium Hardness** Water was first described as 'hard' because it was hard to make soap 'lather up'. Hard water contains higher levels of calcium and magnesium. Total Hardness is the sum of:

Temporary Hardness - formed by bicarbonates of earth metals which can be filtered out after being heated and

Permanent Hardness - formed by alkaline salts including chlorides and sulphates. These cannot be filtered out.

The hardness of water is expressed as calcium carbonate PPM. The ideal range for your concrete pool is 200 - 300 PPM. In a newly plastered pool the calcium hardness will increase in the first month as the Rainbow Quartz cement render cures. During this curing period we recommend brushing the walls and floor of the pool every day and vacuum the residue described as 'plaster dust'. Keep filters effective during this phase by backwashing or cleaning regularly.

**Total Dissolved Solids (TDS)** originate from several sources including: some water supplies containing mineral salts e.g. creeks, dams or bores. Pool chemicals like chlorine can break down to form chlorides or salt. Then there is organic matter introduced to the pool like sweat, grass clippings, leaves, dust and pollen. Pools using salt water chlorinators will have higher TDS readings which is not usually a problem. If TDS reach extreme levels, the solution is to replace some of the pool water with fresh water.

### **Tips When Adding 'Stuff' to Your Pool**

Take note of instructions on the containers, as doing it the wrong way could be dangerous to you or damaging to your pool.

- Dilute liquid chemicals and dissolve solid chemicals before adding to the pool. If diluting in a container, add the chemicals to water already in the container - never add water on top of neat chemicals.
- Make sure you have the pump and filter running then spread the diluted chemical all round the pool, not just where it is convenient for you. Leave the pump and filter running for a while.
- Never mix different chemicals together.
- Take care when using algaecides which contain copper. The copper stays in the pool and at some stage, if the level builds up too high, it will 'plate out' and deposit as a black stain over the entire pool surface.
- You can place a 'sock' containing dry granules in the skimmer box while the pump and filter is running. This will effectively dissolve and disburse the contents.