

Pond Department

Pond & Water Feature Tips

1. The less organic material left in your feature the better. Cut back all dead and dying material off of the plants in your pond, particularly in the fall. Ensure all skimmers and filtrations are working optimally and clean when necessary. Remove any missed needles and leaves from the bottom of the pond. Failure to do so only increases maintenance and other issues in the seasons to come.
2. Netting is most effective in the fall when arched over the pond. Use four rebar stakes set in the ground at 45 degree angles towards the pond, positioned in a cross or X shape. Measure the distance between them crossing the pond. Use twice the length of that distance in ½” PVC and bend the PVC over the pond in an X. Zip-tie the peak if needed. Then stretch the netting over the frame and secure it to the ground with landscape staples.
3. If you have to drain the pond for your yearly clean up, do so during cooler seasons (preferably fall) to reduce stress and loss of fish. The water temperature coming out of your garden hose will be much closer to the temperature in the water. Dechlorinate.
4. Pond vacuums make cleaning out the bottom of your pond a breeze. Pond Vacuums with a continuous draw make it even faster! No major water draining necessary.
5. Pond nets make getting errant leaves and other debris that accumulate in dead zones much easier. Try the Pondshark Pro!
6. Pond thermometers makes it more efficient to tell when you should start and stop feeding fish, as well as when to use de-icers. Do not feed fish under 45 degrees.
7. If you plan to leave your pump system running over the winter, make sure you monitor the first season. If the ice flow forms in such a way that it could divert the water out of your pond, explore other options like aerators and de-icers.

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8. Winterize your pumps, UV units, pressure filters, and other vulnerable units before hard frost. Clean all materials and lubricate all seals to prevent premature failure. Do not use products that could prove harmful to wildlife
9. Use beneficial bacteria treatments such as Aqua-One and Microbe-Lift on a monthly basis. It is a necessary part of your nitrogen cycle, and may cause serious repercussions including fish loss if you choose to forgo it.
10. Go all natural! Barley-straw extract, calcium montmorillonite clay, pond salt, and beneficial bacteria will do what 4 times the amount in chemical products do, naturally! This will maintain a clean, crystal clear, and gorgeously healthy pond. Add some carbonto your filter or skimmer for added security and unmatched clarity and health!
11. Do not scrub the sides of ponds and natural water features! The thin layer of bio-film that grows on the sides of your liner is an important part of your ecosystem and processes pollutants, nutrients that may otherwise feed algae growth, and other materials that may degrade your water quality.
12. When using chemical algaecides, make sure your pond has plenty of aeration, and read labels for proper amounts. A fish kill resulting in the use of algaecides is more often due to lack of oxygen as a result of so many algae being killed off at once, rather than the overdose of said product.
13. Having issues keeping on top of green water? Consider a UV unit to clear the water in a matter of days! Be sure to turn the unit off for 24-48 hours after applying any bacterial treatment.
14. UV units can be used for clarity as well as for germicidal purposes. If you spec your UV wattage appropriately, it will kill many microscopic parasites that can affect your fish!

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15. Have creatures in your pond? We recommend testing your water weekly. The faster you notice something is out of balance, the easier it will be to correct and the less problems you will have.
16. Perform weekly water changes in features with creatures to keep them healthy and your pond fresh. A 10-15% water change is usually sufficient for maintenance purposes.
17. No Koi to take care of string algae in your water feature? If you use salt in your pond, a copper ionizer is the mortal enemy of any algae in a body of water. Follow up with bacteria treatments and a filtration cleaning to process the dead waste.
18. Do you want “gin clear” water for that social event you had planned at your home? Put activated Carbon in your filter falls or skimmer for unmatched polish and clarity in your pond. Soaks up tannins, microscopic debris, ammonia, nitrite, nitrates, and odors!
19. Don't clean your bacteria-rich bio-media (bio-balls, ribbon, lava rock, etc.) unless absolutely necessary. Otherwise you will need to start from square one with heavy bacteria treatments.
20. Upgrade to back-washable filtration units for ease of filter maintenance. Consider back-washable Filter Falls, pressure filters, and bead filters. These units also tend to outperform other manual maintenance units as well! Spend less time cleaning and more time enjoying your feature!
21. Consider a sieve filter, back-washable waterfall, and pump vault/water storage tank as an alternative to your typical plastic crate (AquaBlox) construction on your pondless waterfall. Keep that feature the cleanest you've ever seen! Plus, save on labor and materials needed to dig and fill that giant basin at the bottom of your falls.