



## POOL MAINTENANCE GUIDE

Specialized for Ottawa Climate | Metal Body & Vinyl Liner Pools

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Welcome to pool ownership in Ottawa! With proper seasonal care tailored to our beautiful four-season climate, your metal wall and vinyl liner pool will provide years of enjoyment and reliable performance.

This guide gives you a straightforward maintenance routine designed specifically for Ottawa conditions -- helping you spend less time on upkeep and more time enjoying crystal clear water all summer long.



### OTTAWA SEASONAL TIMELINE

#### Spring Opening (Late April - Mid May)

*Target: Once daytime highs consistently hit 10-15°C.*

- Pump off winter cover water completely.
- Remove, clean, and store the cover.
- Re-install deck equipment (ladders, rails).
- Re-connect pump, filter, and heater.
- Add water to mid-skimmer level.
- Critical:** Start system and check for leaks immediately.
- Balance chemicals (Alkalinity first, then pH, then Chlorine).

#### Fall Closing (Late Sept - Early Oct)

*Target: Before first hard frost, water temp below 15°C.*

- Balance water one last time.
- Lower water level below returns (follow specific skimmer type instructions).
- Blow out lines to prevent freezing pipes (Essential in Ottawa).
- Add closing kit/winterizing chemicals.
- Install winter plugs in returns and skimmer (Gizzmo).
- Cover pool securely to handle snow load.

## WEEKLY MAINTENANCE ROUTINE

Once your pool is dialed in, weekly maintenance usually takes about 30 minutes.

### MONDAY - TEST & ADJUST (10 min)

- Test pH (Ideal: 7.4 - 7.6) and Chlorine (Ideal: 1-3 ppm)
- Adjust chemicals if needed (Always add acid to water, not water to acid)
- Check water level (Should be at mid-skimmer)

### MIDWEEK - QUICK CHECK (5 min)

- Quick test strip check for pH + Chlorine
- Empty skimmer baskets
- Visual check: clarity, walls, equipment sounds

### WEEKEND CLEAN & BOOST (15 min)

- Skim surface debris
- Brush walls, steps, and floor (Critical for vinyl liners to prevent staining)
- Vacuum manually or run the automatic cleaner
- Clean/backwash filter if pressure is 8-10 PSI above clean level

**Shock Treatment:** Apply every 1-2 weeks or after heavy use/rain. Add in the evening. Safe to swim when chlorine returns to 1-3 ppm.

## VINYL LINER CARE IN COLD CLIMATES



The "Floating Liner" Risk: In Ottawa springs, high groundwater can cause liners to "float" or bubble. Never drain your pool completely without professional guidance. The weight of the water holds the liner in place.

Winter Brittleness: Vinyl becomes brittle in freezing temperatures. Never try to pick ice off a winter cover or hit the liner to break ice. One impact can shatter cold vinyl.

Waterline Maintenance: Use a non-abrasive vinyl cleaner to remove the "bathtub ring" caused by oils and sunscreen. This prevents the liner from drying out and cracking at the waterline over time.

## MONTHLY & SEASONAL TASKS

### MONTHLY

- Test Calcium Hardness (200-400 ppm)
- Test Cyanuric Acid/Stabilizer (30-50 ppm)
- Check caulking around pool deck for separation
- Inspect pump lid O-ring for cracks (lubricate if needed)

### WINTER WATCH (JAN-MAR)

- Check water level under cover occasionally
- Ensure cover pump is working to remove snowmelt
- Monitor for excessive snow load on cover

### ⚠️ WHAT YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE

- ❌ Cloudy water that won't clear: Usually a filtration or chemistry imbalance.
- ❌ Recurring algae: Indicates phosphates or insufficient sanitizer levels.
- ❌ Leaks or strange noises: Screeching bearings indicate pump failure.
- ❌ Vinyl liner wrinkles or tears: Wrinkles often mean groundwater issues or low pH.
- ❌ Chlorine Tablets in Skimmer: NEVER put pucks in the skimmer. The high concentration of acid will destroy the pump seal and heater.

**Happy Swimming!**

Need help with opening, closing, or maintenance?  
**[ottawahomeandgarden.com](http://ottawahomeandgarden.com)**

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Always refer to your specific equipment manuals.

