

**Tri-State Pools, Inc.**

Pool Renovations And  
New Construction



**BUILT TO LAST**

## Pool Care Instructions



Pool Care Instructions  
revised Jan. 2011

# Please read these instructions before your pool is completed.

Congratulations on the completion of your new pool or renovation ! Your new pool is the result of more than 30 years experience in the pool construction industry. You can be confident that only the finest products, materials & workmanship have gone into your pool.

While our pools are very simple to operate and maintain, they can become very expensive if not given consistent and responsible care. As the owner, you will want to protect your investment as well as the health of your family and friends. It is of **MAXIMUM IMPORTANCE** that you read and follow the enclosed instructions regarding pool filling and initial brushing/curing period for your pool interior finish. It is also very important that you maintain your pool water chemistry and filtration system to avoid any potential problems.

## Tri-State's Service Referral Network

We **STRONGLY** recommend that you develop a relationship with a qualified pool service company. Through our many years in the industry, Tri-State has built a "Service Referral Network" of the areas **MOST QUALIFIED** pool service companies. Please refer to the contact information printed on your project invoice(s) or consult with your Tri-State Project Manager for our recommended pool service company in your area. We suggest that you consult with them directly on the operation and maintenance of your pool.

Some of the services that they will be able to provide are:

- **POOL START UP & INITIAL CHEMICAL TREATMENT**
- **POOL BRUSHING & AFTERCARE**
- **WEEKLY MAINTENANCE & EMERGENCY SERVICE**
- **POOL OPENING & WINTERIZATION**



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# Pool Filling Instructions

Your pool is now complete. Our interior finish crew has completed the finish application of your pool and has started the filling of your pool.

1. We suggest that you have your hose/home water tested prior to pool filling to check it's chemistry BEFORE it has an opportunity to effect the new interior finish during the filling process. This can be done at your pool service retail store. You should also consult with your service company as to adding any mineral or stain prevention chemicals to the fill water.
2. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should you stop the water while the pool is being filled. Stopping the fill water could result in a "bathtub ring" in the fresh interior finish. If you are worried about your house water pressure or if you have a well system, you should consider having water trucked in. At your request, your project manager can coordinate water deliveries on your behalf.\*
3. DO NOT remove or move the hose while the pool is filling. It is important that the hose water continue to be directed into the "pool" of water and NOT directly onto the fresh finish. Do not allow anyone to touch the pool finish during the filling process.
4. The pool is full when it reaches the middle of the skimmer. When the water reaches this point, it is time to shut off the fill water and BEGIN THE BRUSHING PERIOD. Please refer to the following pages for Brushing Period Instructions. When your pool is full, it is also the time to have your pool service company add the initial chemical treatment & do the system start-up. PLEASE CONSULT with your Tri-State recommended service company for this service.

\*PLEASE NOTE- If you are getting water trucked in, it is important to begin filling with your hose water to provide the proper "cushion" of water prior to the first water truck. We suggest a cushion depth of approx 24" to provide adequate protection of the finish from the force of the water being pumped from the delivery truck. Usually we allow the hose water to fill thru the first night and water trucks arriving the following morning.

**CAUTION-** DO NOT fill your pool with "soft" water. If you have a water softening device for your home make sure to put it into by-pass mode prior to filling of your pool. Note that some outside water spigots are already designed to by-pass the water softening device/system.



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# Please consult with your Tri-State recommended service company for proper chemical treatment & start-up/after care procedures.

The main objectives are to achieve “balanced” water chemistry including proper levels of sanitizer, stabilizer, PH, total alkalinity & calcium hardness while at the same time following our instructions regarding the initial brushing period.

Please note that we have provided some of the manufacturers suggested start-up procedures for the different finish types. Please refer to the corresponding instructions provided for your finish type in the following pages.

Local water conditions will play an important role in your pool’s water chemistry as they differ greatly from area to area and even from day to day. The initial fill water is the most important water your pool will receive. We suggest that you have your hose/home water tested prior to pool filling to check it’s chemistry BEFORE it has an opportunity to effect the new interior finish. This can be done at your pool service retail store. The following parameters should be used as a guideline for proper adjustment & maintenance of pool water chemistry.

## Saturation Index

Chlorine	1-3ppm
PH	7.4 - 7.6
Total Alkalinity (TA)	80 - 120ppm
Calcium Hardness (CH)	200 - 400ppm
Cyanuric Acid (stabilizer)	less than 50ppm
Sequestering agent	12ppm

DO NOT use Calcium based Chlorine products as they can damage the surface.

A basic set of equipment for pool owners includes an extendable telepole, nylon pool brush, skimmer net and leaf rake, vacuum set-up & water test kit.

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# General Maintenance Guidelines

## Brushing

The brushing of your pool interior is an important maintenance procedure because it will help circulate pool water (all pools have some circulation "dead" areas), help keep the finish smooth & debris free as well as help prevent metals, minerals & scale from adhering the surface. We suggest brushing the pool surface at least once a week thru the life of the pool (except for "Initial Brushing Period") See Brushing Period Instructions.

## Water Testing

You should test the pool water chemistry for proper levels (see Saturation Index previous page) BEFORE ever adding any chemicals. During the initial brushing & start-up period you will need to test the water on a daily basis until proper balance is achieved. After that it is good practice to test your pool water weekly during the pool season. Areas of high water hardness, evaporation, high usage/bather load & other unique factors may require more frequent testing. When adding chemicals we suggest pre-diluting them in a bucket of water before adding them to your pool. Certain chemicals added directly to the pool water without pre-diluting can cause damage/staining.

## Stain Prevention

The regular use of stain prevention type chemicals can greatly reduce the staining effects of the dissolved minerals in your pool water. Always follow manufacturers directions or consult with your pool service company for proper dosages for your pool.

## Filtration

Proper filtration and circulation of your pool water is very important. Your pool should be filtered daily to insure the removal of dirt and debris as well as providing adequate circulation of water/chemicals. Never allow foreign objects, dirt or debris to sit undisturbed for long periods of time as this will promote discoloration and staining.

Important Maintenance Note- Staining & scale formation is NOT covered under our warranty. It is important to keep your pool clean and water balanced at all times. Stains on the finish are commonly caused by scale formation (feels like sandpaper) and is due to unbalanced water chemistry or improper brushing (period). Please make sure that when your pool is closed that it is very clean and water is in balance. Proper winter chemicals should be added as part of the winterizing process. If you develop stains it is important to remove them asap. Staining at the winterized water level is common and usually will dissipate with the addition of chemicals after pool opening.



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# Brushing Period Instructions

1. Brushing of the entire interior finish is required for all finishes except Pebble Tec or Pebble Sheen. Brushing should start immediately once the pool is full. Pool start up should begin at approximately the same time but brushing can begin before start up if the timing works out that way.
2. Brushing of the entire interior (walls, floor, steps, benches, etc...) is needed to "stir up" the calcium powder that leaches from the finish during the curing period. Calcium leaches from most interior pool finishes naturally and needs to be filtered out before it can settle and adhere to the pool surface. Brushing must be done twice daily for a minimum of two weeks or until the calcium dust dissipates through brushing & filtration. Starting at the tile line, push your nylon pool brush/telepole across the surface, down the pool wall and across the pool floor. One pass is all that is needed. You do not need to scrub the finish. Take care to make one pass over the entire surface towards the bottom drains.
3. You should be very careful when vacuuming your pool during the brushing period. Hard vacuum wheels and over aggressive movements can damaged the interior finish. If you need to vacuum, use a vacuum head with soft wheels or a vinyl liner style head which has no wheels. Take your time and vacuum slowly. You can vacuum "to waste" which will help get rid of the calcium dust quickly and requires less frequent filter backwashes because the dust is not being deposited in the filter/grids. If you vacuum to waste, you will most likely need to add fresh make up water to the middle of the tile line.
4. DO NOT turn on your pool heater during the brushing period as the calcium can damage the internals of the heater.
5. You may use your auto cleaner system during the brushing period with caution. Make sure the cleaner unit does not have any hard running surfaces that could damage the fresh plaster. Only run the cleaner as long as is need to clean any debris and no more than a couple of hours per day. Please note that using a pool cleaner DOES NOT take the place of brushing.
6. Your filter system should always be operated 24hrs. a day during the brushing period. Once you are finished with the brushing period and your water is in proper balance you should operate the filter system long enough each day to circulate every gallon of pool water at least once (called turnover). This usually requires about 8hrs per day.



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# Finish Manufacturer Start-up Procedures

## Pebble Tec® Start-Up Procedure

Congratulations on your new Pebble Tec® or Pebble Sheen® pool finish. Please note a very important factor pertaining to the product warranty. The water chemistry in your swimming pool and/or spa must be maintained at certain levels to prevent scale build-up, (a white haze on your pool finish). Scale removal is not covered by warranty. It is recommended to test your pool water monthly at a retail pool supply store (in some stores testing is computerized). Even if you use a pool service company, it is still recommended that you regularly check your water chemistry balance to be sure it is properly maintained. The most common removal of scale is by draining your pool, cleaning with chemicals and pressure washing. Scale removal will be done at your own expense.

- The majority of the balancing between the pool water and its new environment (the plaster) will naturally take place during the first 30 days. This is a natural process and must be allowed to occur!

### Pool Filling Day

Make sure the filtration equipment is operational.

1. Remove all floor return heads and directional eyeballs (if appropriate and recommended in your geographical area).
2. Based on temperature and type of finish, fill the pool to the middle of the skimmer or specified water level without interruption as rapidly as possible with clean potable water to help prevent a bowl ring. Place a clean rag on the end of the hose, always placed in the deepest area, to prevent damage to the surface material. If a water truck is required, 24 inches (60 cm) of water should be placed at the deepest area for a water cushion.
3. At no time should any person or pets be allowed in the pool during the fill. Do not let any external sources of water to enter the pool to help prevent streaking.
4. Test the fill water for pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness and metals. Record test results.
5. Start the filtration system immediately when the pool is full to the middle of the skimmer or specified water level.



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## Pebble-Tec Start-Up (continued)

### 1st Day

1. Test pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness and metals. Record test results.
2. High alkalinity should be adjusted to 80 ppm using pre-diluted Muriatic Acid (31-33% Hydrochloric acid). Always pre-dilute the acid by adding it to a five gallon (19L) bucket of pool water.
3. Low alkalinity should be adjusted to 80 ppm using sodium bicarbonate (Baking soda).
4. pH should be reduced to 7.2 to 7.6 adding pre-diluted Muriatic Acid if the alkalinity is already 80-100 ppm.
5. Brush the entire pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to remove all plaster dust.
6. Add one quart of the magenta stuff™ per 15,000 gallons of pool water.
7. Operate filtration system continuously for a minimum of 72 hours.
8. DO NOT add chlorine for 48 hours.

### 2nd Day

1. Brush the pool
2. Test pH, alkalinity and calcium hardness and repeat steps of 1st Day except for Step 6.

### 3rd Day

1. Test pH, alkalinity and calcium hardness and repeat 1st Day Steps 1 through 6.
2. Pre-diluted chlorine may now be added to achieve 1.5 to 3 ppm. NO SALT SHOULD BE ADDED FOR 28 DAYS.
3. Brush the entire pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to remove all plaster dust.

### 4th Through The 28TH Day

1. Test pH, Carbonate alkalinity and calcium hardness and repeat 1st Day Steps 1-5 every day for 14 days to help prevent the scaling of the pool surface.
2. On the 7th Day, if there is any plaster dust remaining - remove it using a brush pool vacuum.
3. After the 4th Day - low calcium levels should be adjusted slowly over the 28 day period not to exceed 200 ppm.
4. After the 4th Day - adjust cyanuric acid levels to 30 to 50 ppm based on the primary sanitizer of the pool (pre-dissolve and add through the skimmer).



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# Diamond Brite Start-up Procedures

- A. After the finish is exposed, let it air dry for as long as conditions will allow. Delaying the fill water a few hours or until the next morning will reduce the occurrence of shade variations (mottling). Care must be taken not to over-dry the plaster and cause shrinkage cracking. There are no substitutes for experience and knowledge of local conditions, in determining how long to let a plaster air-dry.
- B. Pre-filter the water with a carbon tank and use a sequestering agent to eliminate stain-causing contaminants.
- C. Start the circulation system as soon as possible using the main drain line. Do not start the system until the water level is above the return inlets. Circulate the pool continuously for the first 3 days.
- D. On the first day test and record chlorine, pH, total alkalinity, calcium hardness and temperature levels. Adjust pH to 7.2 - 7.4 and the Total Alkalinity to 100 PPM. Dissolve all chemicals in water first and allow sufficient time for each chemical to be fully dispersed before adding others. Do not add chlorine or calcium chloride.
- E. Brush the entire surface twice each day for the first 3 days. Clean the filter as needed.
- F. On the second day repeat steps D. and E.
- G. On the third day, adjust all the chemistry to the following levels:  
Free chlorine: 1.0 - 3.0 PPM    pH: 7.4    Total Alkalinity: 120 PPM  
Calcium Hardness: 200 PPM\* Stabilizer: 30 PPM \*Note: Lower Calcium levels help to reduce scale and discoloration.
- H. Adjust the pump timer to normal operating hours.
- I. Do not install automatic pool cleaners for 28 days.
- J. Do not vacuum the pool with a wheeled vacuum for 14 days, to avoid leaving "wheel marks". Brush type vacuums may be used immediately.
- K. Brush pool walls and floor daily for the first 2 weeks.

Note: These suggested guidelines are based on feedback from our customers throughout the nation. They represent an average of what has worked best for the majority and do not guarantee that you will not experience common plaster phenomenon such as staining, mottling, efflorescence and scale. Water supplies vary from one municipality to the next and therefore common-sense, experience and good testing procedures must be followed. Refer to the N.S.P.I. guidelines on start up and chemistry for more detailed information.



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# Hydrazzo Start-up Procedures

The pool finish will start to hydrate and cure immediately after mixing, with the majority of hydration taking place within the first 28 days. This critical time period is when a finish is most susceptible to staining, scaling and discoloration. Proper start-up procedures including timely brushing and constant monitoring and adjusting of the pool water is mandatory. The following recommended start-up method is based on procedures shown to produce the best aesthetic results. Brushing and monitored chemical adjustments will be mandatory by the homeowner or a trained pool technician during the service life of any pool surface. **NEVER MIX CHEMICALS—ALWAYS ADD CHEMICALS TO WATER, NEVER WATER TO CHEMICALS.**

## POOL FILL DAY

Step 1. Make sure the filtration equipment is operational.

Step 2. Remove all floor return heads and directional eyeballs to prevent streaking.

Step 3. Based on temperature and type of finish, fill the pool to the middle of the skimmer or specified water level without interruption as rapidly as possible with clean potable water to help prevent a bowl ring. Place a clean rag on the end of the hose placed at the deepest area of the pool to prevent plaster damage. If a water truck is required, 24 inches (60 cm) of water should be placed at the deepest area for a water cushion.

Step 4. At no time should any person be allowed in the pool during the fill. Step

5. Dark finishes, slow fills, hot or windy conditions may require misting the pool finish after 400 minutes during the fill process to minimize cracking.

Step 6. Test the fill water for pH, total alkalinity, calcium hardness, and metals. Record test results.

Step 7. Start the filtration system immediately when the pool is full to the middle of the skimmer or specified water level.

## 1ST DAY

Step 1. Test the pool water for pH, total alkalinity, calcium hardness, and metals. Record test results.

\*Step 2. High total alkalinity should be lowered to 80 ppm (mg/l) using pre-diluted Muriatic Acid (31-33% Hydrochloric acid). Always pre-dilute the acid by adding it to a 5 gallon (19 L) bucket of pool water.

Step 3. High pH should be reduced to 7.2 if the alkalinity is already 80-100 ppm (mg/l) using pre-diluted Muriatic Acid (31-33% hydrochloric).

\*Step 4. Add a pre-diluted quality, testable sequestering agent to achieve 15-20 ppm (mg/l). Follow manufacturer's start-up recommendations.

Step 5. Brush the entire pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to homogenize chemicals and remove plaster dust.

Step 6. Operate filtration system continuously a minimum of 72 hours.

Step 7. **DO NOT** add chlorine for 48 hours. This can unintentionally create fallout and cause metal precipitation which may stain or discolor the surface.



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## Hydrazzo Start-up Procedure (continued)

### 2nd DAY

NEVER MIX CHEMICALS – ALWAYS ADD CHEMICALS TO WATER, NEVER WATER TO CHEMICALS

Step 1. Repeat 1st Day steps

Step 2. Operate filtration system continuously a minimum of 48 hours.

Step 3. Brush the pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to homogenize added chemicals and remove plaster dust.

### 3rd DAY

Step 1. Repeat 1st DAY steps 1 thru 6.

Step 2. Start to increase the total alkalinity slowly over the next 4 days to 80 ppm (mg/l).

Step 3. Pre-diluted chlorine may now be added to achieve 1.5 to 3 ppm (mg/l)

NOTE- NO SALT SHOULD BE ADDED FOR 30 DAYS.

Step 4. Brush the pool surface thoroughly at least twice daily to homogenize added chemicals and remove plaster dust.

### 4th THROUGH THE 28TH DAY

Step 1. Repeat 1st DAY steps 1 THRU 5 every 2 days for 28 days to help prevent scaling and staining of the pool surface.

Step 2. After 4th Day - calcium levels should be adjusted slowly not to exceed 200 ppm (mg/l) during the next 28 days.

Step 3. After 4th Day - adjust cyanuric acid levels to 30-50ppm (mg/l) based on primary sanitizer of the pool (pre-dissolve through skimmer).

Step 4. On the 7th day any remaining plaster dust may be removed by vacuuming with a brush pool vacuum.

## Interior Finish Characteristics

Every effort has been made by our Interior Finish Crew to provide you with the absolute best possible pool finish. However, there are certain characteristics of interior pool finishes of which you should be aware.

1. Interior finishes are not designed to be slick or "tile like". They are as smooth as hand troweling will permit. Exposed aggregate or Pebble finishes are designed to have a texture. They are not smooth to the touch. Vigorous play activity and long periods in the pool may result abrasions to the fingers and toes.



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## Finish Characteristics (continued)

2. Interior finishes are not perfect or flawless. They are as perfect as hand troweling will permit.
3. Your pool finish contains raw mined materials and cement. It is not uncommon to have the material contain small black, gold, brown, etc...flecks throughout the finish. There is no reason for concern as these flecks will not effect the durability of the finish.
4. The pool interior may look blotchy and or streaked for an extended period of time. This is normal and is generally caused by the curing process and the reaction of the chemicals in the filling water. Several months may go by before the finish cures to a fairly even shade. Finishes that contain pigments will never be one even shade and are subject to continuing mottling, uneven color, streaking and fading. Please refer to the "Colored Finishes Agreement" section of your pool contract.
5. It is normal for Pebble finishes to have a certain amount of pebble loss. This will not effect the durability of the finish.
6. Keep in mind that stains are most commonly due to water condition, weather conditions or water chemistry. It is vital that you take maximum care and caution concerning the maintenance of your pool.
7. Underwater lights will magnify small objects and flaws in the finish and may give the interior a "wavy" effect. This is normal with all hand troweled surfaces.
8. You will see a certain amount of crazing (tiny cracks in the surface). This is normal and will not effect the finish durability.
9. All exposed aggregate finishes will have variations in shade, color and aggregate exposure.

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