

A sparkling clean swimming pool is a joy - and with today's technology, it's no chore to keep it that way

There are a number of different types of cleaning systems. It's simply a matter of choice to find the one that fits your requirements and your budget.

You could of course choose to manually vacuum your pool on a regular basis - but by far the most popular choice today is to use one of the many portable cleaning systems or a built in cleaning and circulation system.

Broadly, these can be broken into four categories:

1. Suction Cleaners
2. Pressure Cleaners
3. Electric Self-Propelled Cleaners
4. Built-in In-Floor Systems

SUCTION CLEANERS

In most cases, these systems are designed to plug into the pool's skimmer box and are powered by the filter pump. They vacuum the floor in a random pattern, picking-up debris and placing it in the skimmer basket for later emptying.

Most manufacturers usually recommend they be removed during swimming times.

PRESSURE CLEANERS

These cleaners are designed in most cases to use a separate boost pump. They take some of the filtered water from the pool return line, boost the pressure, and return it to the cleaning system. This filtered high-pressure water is then used to jet into every corner of the pool. Pressure cleaners use venture action to vacuum debris into a bag for later emptying. This method puts no load on the filter system which makes it especially useful in very leafy locations. Most manufacturers recommend they be removed during swimming times also.

ELECTRIC SELF-PROPELLED CLEANERS

As the name suggests, these cleaners are independent devices, operating under their own low voltage power. They travel the entire floor of the pool, sweeping and vacuuming debris, which they pick up and carry in their own body. They have their own pump and drive motor as well as a small built-in filter, which cleans the water before returning it back into the pool.

This type of cleaner is more suited to commercial pool operators, as they can install them at night after the pool has been closed for the day and remove them the following day.

IN-FLOOR CLEANING SYSTEMS

An in-floor cleaning system is central to a low maintenance pool - the ultimate in pool ownership. Not only do they clean the entire pool, including steps, seats and swim out areas, they improve heat distribution, chemical distribution and general circulation.

Some in-floor cleaning systems require a separate pump, while the most energy efficient systems operate from a single pump in conjunction with the pool's filtering system. All in-floor systems pump water through a valve to sequential groups of pop-up floor and step nozzles. Water returns to the pool through these nozzles and directs debris towards collection points for removal.

The decision to install an in-floor cleaning system must be made well in advance.

Systems are built into concrete and fibreglass pools during construction and should only be installed by accredited builders backed by a reputable system with computer designed plans.

Once installed, an in-floor cleaning system is virtually maintenance free and will keep your pool spotless. Some pool owners prefer to turn the system off during swimming, however, there is no requirement to do so, as there are no hoses in the pool.

