

Do Legwork, Plan Well Before You buy that Pool

Purchase of a home swimming pool is an important investment which requires careful planning and a good deal of legwork. But done right, the pool adds beauty, prestige and value to a home. It provides a family fun center and offers privacy, an increasingly rare commodity in the modern world.

Last year about 100,000 families went ahead with plans for an inground pool and another 200,000 decided on an above-ground pool, according to estimates made by the National Swimming Pool Institute.

Above-ground pools offer a low purchase price, easy installation and yet plenty of splashing room for children and adults. A small pool package complete with filter system at many department stores is sold for just several hundred dollars. Pool stores offering above-ground pools are competitive and usually offer a bigger variety of sizes and shapes from which to select. They also

provide the supplies and games usually required by a pool owner and have the ability to help a new pool owner install and maintain the pool properly.

The average in-ground residential pool last year cost about \$6,000, depending upon the area of the country, and the particular problems of excavating the ground for the pool.

But, says NSPI, the first consideration in pool selection is to fit the pool to the needs of the family. Does the family wish to use the pool primarily for splashing or for exercising?

For a family with small children an above-ground pool may be ideal. It affords an extra measure of safety by being raised above the ground level. The water level can also be raised or lowered to accommodate the needs of the family. The shallow end of an inground pool for such a family should be large enough to provide for plenty of play area,

and the diving end should be separated by a safety rope with floats to keep children from accidentally getting in too deep. A separate wading pool may even be considered as an interim measure. When the children are older, it can be turned into a garden pool.

If no one in the family is a diver, you can save money by building a pool without a diving hopper. If diving is preferred, make sure that the pool conforms to the National Swimming Pool Institute's minimum standards. One way to do this is to select a "Registered Pool Builder," a company participating in NSPI's "Pool Registry Program." The program classified in-ground pools into five categories according to the dimensions of the diving hopper. Diving boards are matched to these dimensions to give assurance that there is enough water available to catch divers safely.

A pool for swimming laps is rectangular, or at least, offers a long, unbroken stretch for swimming. But pools are available in all sizes and shapes from the random "jungle lagoon" to the formal oval, the curving kidney, a "four leaf clover" or any other shape to express an owner's individuality. Pools are constructed today using pneumatically applied concrete, poured concrete, fiberglass and vinyl liners stretched over wood or metal forms. Each is available in a multitude of shapes and sizes.

another important consideration. Naturally, you will want a sunny spot. If you have children, it is best to locate the pool near the house so that you can keep an eye on them at all times.

placing the pool at a distance from the house and investing in a bathing cabana to avoid wet feet tracking into your house.

Some sort of wind shelter near the pool is an excellent idea. A
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