



## Financial Considerations for Installing a Backyard Pool

With many public pools in Kentucky remaining closed for at least part of the summer, some families are looking to create an aquatic playground in their own backyard. Skipping summer vacation costs and fees for kids' camps may help provide some extra funds to pay for a pool. But be aware that there are many costs beyond the initial installation.

Pool prices can vary greatly. Small inflatable kiddie pools can be as cheap as \$20. Aboveground pools can range from the hundreds to the thousands of dollars depending on the size and the material used to make it. Some pools require professional installation. Backyards that aren't flat may need leveling first. Inground pools cost substantially more and might require building permits for the construction. Get estimates from multiple contractors and verify their license and references.

Running a pump will add to your monthly electrical bill. If you've never had a pool before, consider whether you might need to hire a licensed electrician to prepare the area for the voltage needed and make sure the electricity to the pump is grounded.

And of course, there is a cost to filling the pool with water. In the month you fill your pool, your water bill may double, depending on the size of the pool and how many gallons it holds.

Other monthly costs include maintenance for the pool. Chemicals alone may cost between \$5 and \$15 per month for do-it-yourself monitoring. Professional services can cost more. The first year you own the pool, you'll likely spend extra on tools such as testing kits, nets, cleaning supplies, and more.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says there is no evidence that COVID-19 can spread to people through pool water if the pool is properly operated and disinfected. There is concern about virus transfer through contact with other people, whether in or out of water. According to Purdue University, the general guidance for keeping pools properly disinfected is maintaining a free chlorine concentration between 1 and 5 milligrams per liter. For information on pool safety, cleaning, and testing, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/index.html>.

There are many optional expenses that might go along with installing a more permanent style of pool. If you are creating your dream backyard oasis, it might include decking, lighting, landscaping, and patio furniture. For the safety of children and pets, you should consider fencing and gates or other safety barriers. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends a four-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Also make sure that drain covers comply with federal safety standards to avoid entrapments. Adults with children shouldn't consider a pool unless they are willing to be outside with the kids to monitor safety.

Because pools may increase liability risk, you should check your liability coverage on your homeowner's insurance policy. Find out what is covered and whether a pool is considered a structure that is included in your policy. Liability limits often start at around \$100,000. Pool owners may want to consider purchasing additional protection.

Installing a pool may or may not affect your home's value. If it does bump your property value, your taxes may follow suit. If you're planning to move anytime in the near future, the pool may change your home's sales prospects. Potential buyers who don't want the hassle of upkeep or have concerns about safety may view the pool as a detraction to the home's value. Inground pools cost a lot to remove later.

## References

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