



# CREATING & MAINTAINING A BEAUTIFUL POND

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## *Good planning gives superior results*

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*Anyone can have a pond, regardless of yard shape or size. With a little planning and a small amount of effort, you can enjoy the relaxing effects and beauty that a pond or water garden can bring. A pond can be as simple as a wooden tub and pump, or elaborate and complicated with streams, waterfalls and fountains. Water gardens are easy, attractive and need not be expensive. A little imagination can take you a long way!*

**Getting started.** The most important question to answer is: "Where should your pond or water garden be?" The ideal location is an area of morning sun and afternoon shade. The spot should be as level as possible and safe from irrigation or rain water runoff. Consider a location where the pond will be free from falling leaves and twigs. Decide on the size of your pond and finally, put it where you can see and enjoy it as much as possible.

**Handy tip:** The larger or deeper the pond, the easier it is to maintain water quality. Water temperature is more stable throughout the year, providing a better environment for fish and plants.

Consider our extensive line of preformed ponds. A friendly irrigation or plant specialist can answer questions and assist with your selection. If you wish to plan your own design, our heavy-duty pond liners are easy alternatives to messy, time-consuming concrete work.

**Setting up the site.** Two basic options: In-the-Ground.... Or Above-Ground. Because our soil is often so very hard to dig in, many individuals prefer to use *Diamond Wall* or *Windsor Wall* blocks around a pond shell make a practical, decorative setting for above ground ponds. Simply build a retaining wall of these blocks several layers high (check with local current building codes), and fill the interior with planting soil. Then proceed as you would with an In-the-Ground Pond.

Dig the pond hole a little larger than the size of your pond shell or liner. Place a layer of sand or topsoil between the pond and our native soil. It provides a cushion that protects against damage caused by expansion and water pressure when your pond is filled. For Pond-Shells; fill around the shell after placement with sand or friable soil. Do not leave voids as these can cause damage later when filled. For Liner-Ponds; You will want to trim the liner after placement, allowing extra for tucking and securing. You do not want the liner to slip away from it's location after time, so "tuck" several inches of liner into the soil just beyond the top elevation. Secure this with small rocks or appropriate edging. Ask our specialists if you have questions.

**Plan your water garden.** Pumps and filters are necessary to maintain oxygen levels and water quality. If you plan on having live plants, water quality is essential. Be sure to choose accessories that will re-circulate and filter the total volume of water in your pond once every 2-6 hours. This is determined by the ponds capacity in gallons divided by the flow rate of the pump. Package instructions, along with our sales and irrigation personnel, will guide and assist you with making the right choice.

Want to reduce your maintenance? The addition of some goldfish will do this for you. Keeping the water free of algae is your biggest task, and these attractive little guys will eat it up. You'll find that you actually have less maintenance to do. If you do plan to add fish, stock up to one inch (in length) of goldfish per square foot of surface area. Koi need about 25 square feet per fish to reach full size.

The ecosystem of a pond is very fragile because it is affected by many factors-water, water temperatures, water level, gasses, minerals, sun or shade, aquatic plants and animals. If any of these factors are out of balance, the water environment can go to extremes. It can be so clinically clean that nothing can live in it, or so dirty and algae-ridden that aquatic life can be choked out. The pond water treatments will help you keep a clean, healthy, well-balanced pond.

Plants enhance the oxygen level as well as attractive water features like decorative sprays and fountains. A well-balanced pond should have 1 bunch (about 5-6 stems) of submerged plants called "oxygenators" for every square foot of pond surface area. If the pond has a surface area greater than 100 square feet (10' x 10'), use 1 bunch per 2 square feet. Plan to cover 60-70% of pond surface with water lilies, floating plants or bog plants to have minimum maintenance issues.

**Fill the pond.** Add a water conditioner like *Pond Dechlorinator* to remove chlorine and dissolved metals if you plan to put fish in your water garden. Treat with a *Pond pH Stabilizer* before adding fish. If using a new concrete pond use the pH Stabilizer and drain pond twice before populating with fish.

Plant and place aquatic plants, including submerged plants, in the pond. Wait two weeks. Your pond will go through a natural balancing and curing period during this time. The water will probably turn green. This is a natural, healthy process; do not drain the pond! Green algae on the sides of the pond are actually desirable. Free-flowing algae will clear up as the pond balances. Add fish and scavengers such as snails then sit back and enjoy your efforts!

**IN-THE-POND-PLANTS** (if you do not have fish, use Dr Q's plant tonic to fertilize)

**Foaters.** *These are easy! Simply put them into your pond. Give them partial shade until they acclimate.*

**Water Hyacinth;** Beautiful clusters of purple flowers. Multiplies quickly.

**Water Lettuce;** Tiny white flowers. Puts off many baby plants.

**Bog Plants.** *These need to be placed on a ledge in your pond, so their feet stay wet, but the root-tops can breathe.*

**Water Pennywort;** Creeps over the water surface 6" to 12" height.

**Parrot's Feathers;** Very attractive spreader to 9" height.

**Water Four-Leafed-Clover;** you should have "good luck" with this one.

**Deep Water Potted.** *Have their roots potted deep in your pond. Their stems will reach a long way to the surface.*

**Hardy Water Lily;** Add aquatic soil or washed pea gravel to the pot and place up to 24" deep in your pond. Loves the sun! A variety of colored flowers. Feed with "aquatic food spikes"

Use of a natural, enzyme-based water clarifier like *Care Free Pond Protector* prevents scum and mineral deposits. One capful treats 100 gallons. To control ammonia build up use *Pond Ammonia Eliminator*. Designed to solve the problem of toxic ammonia levels in the fish pond ecosystem. It quickly reduces ammonia, chloramines and chlorine, while leaving nitrogen - an excellent plant food source.

Algae is always a maintenance issue. Periodic use of *Pond Care Algaefix* concentrate will knock out really bad algae problems! It removes and controls green water, algae blooms, string or hair algae and blanketweed. Safe for fish and plants when used as directed. Do not over-feed your fish, this will produce more waste and thus more algae that feeds on this waste. Fish will eat algae, once to twice a week feeding is typically enough in an established pond.

We also offer all-natural products to clarify and protect water in birdbaths and fountains. For additional ideas on ponds, fountains, waterfalls, streams and lighting features, read gardening Tip #1015 or visit any Star Nursery.