

The main purpose in winterizing your above ground swimming pool is to protect it from damage due to freezing water. You also want to keep your swimming pool as clean as possible for the next season. Closing your swim pool properly can save you a lot of work when it comes time to open the above ground swimming pool for the summer.

- The first step in the winterization procedure is to make sure your water chemistry is balanced. You should make sure that your pH, [Total Alkalinity](#), and Calcium Hardness are all balanced. By balancing your water chemistry you are protecting the surface of the above ground pool from staining and etching. Adding a winterizing chemical kit to your water will help keep it blue and clear for the next season. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for the kit.
- Do not use a floater that contains a strong oxidizer (chlorine or bromine) as the floater will stick against the wall and stain and/or bleach your wall, especially a vinyl liner. For the same reasons DO NOT throw chlorine or bromine tablets into the above ground pool. They will sink to the bottom and damage your above ground pool's surface.
- When water freezes, it expands. This can cause great damage to your above ground pool, pool plumbing, and its filter system. If you are closing up your above ground pool for the winter, you should always take precautions to protect from freeze damage no matter where you live. You can never be sure that it will not drop below freezing, even in the Sun Belt.
- Lower [swimming pool](#) water level below the mouth of the skimmer. This will get the water out of the throat of the skimmer which can be easily damaged if water were to freeze here.
- Another option is to put an Aquador over the mouth of the skimmer. This is a plastic dam which holds out the water from the skimmer, allowing you to leave the water level up for the winter.
- The water left in the pool, along with air pillow(s) will help in supporting your cover.
- Drain all the water from your filter equipment and hoses.
  - Start by putting a plug in your return fitting (where water returns to above ground pool).
  - Disconnect your hoses from the return and skimmer or at the filter system and drain them.
  - The filter should have a plug at the bottom that will allow it to drain.
  - Put the multiport valve in the closed or "winterize" position and remove the pressure gauge.
  - Drain the pump by removing the drain plug(s). There may be two plugs to remove here.
  - After draining the pump, turn it on for a brief second to get the water out of the veins of the impeller. Do not run the pump more than a second or two because you can burn out the seal very quickly.
  - If possible take the pump inside to protect it for the winter.
  - If you have a chemical feeder, you should have let the chemicals (chlorine/bromine tablets) run out of your feeder so that no chemicals are left in it.

Leaving chemicals in your feeder over the winter can cause damage to it and other equipment.

- You will now be able to drain your chemical feeder.
  - If you put all the plugs that you have removed into the pump strainer basket, they will be easily found in the spring.
  - It is a good idea to take the pressure gauge inside for the winter because water collects in its tube which can freeze and cause breakage.
  - Do not put the plugs back on the equipment. If the equipment should get water in it, the plugs will prevent proper drainage.
- The final step is to cover your above ground swim pool to keep out the debris. I recommend a solid cover that keeps out all debris and sunlight. This will keep the pool totally clean and prevent most algae growth. I also highly recommend the use of air pillows. These hold the cover up like a dome so that water and debris fall off instead of puddling on the top.