

Seasonal Pond Maintenance Checklist

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easy maintenance guide FOR SIMPLIFIED POND CARE



The following checklist for each season simplifies your maintenance needs and increases your time spent enjoying your water garden.

fall

Preparations for over-wintering success

Make fall/winter pond maintenance simple and efficient. Prevent pond conditions from deteriorating to the point where aggressive measures are necessary. Keep essential items and equipment on hand to ensure over-wintering success.



- Install [pond netting](#) to maximize leaf-removing effort and to prevent leaves from falling into the pond in the first place.
- Perform a substantial water change, up to 50%, to remove contaminants and help maintain improved water conditions throughout the winter. Best done when pond temperature is the same as source water, but no lower than 60°F to minimize stress.
- [Remove organic materials](#) from the bottom of your pond.
- Condition your pond with [bacterial additives specifically formulated to work in cooler water temperatures](#).
- Remove or bring [tropical \(non-hardy\) plants](#) indoors.
- Trim [hardy lilies](#) down to about an inch or two above the crown and move them to a deeper part of the pond.
- Trim [marginal or bog plants](#) or leave some for winter

interest.

- Thoroughly clean your filters. When water temperature drops below 45°F, shut them down and remove [filter media](#) and main pump to prevent damage from freezing.
- Drain and store [pump](#) per manufacturer's recommendation.
- When water temperatures drop below 70°F, begin mixing your koi's diet with an [easier-to-digest, wheat germ food](#). At below 60°F, switch to wheat germ food completely.
- When the water temperature reaches 40°F, stop feeding your fish altogether.

Tip

It's extremely easy to add [pond netting](#) and it will save your pond from collecting debris.

winter

Over-wintering success and preparing for spring

In regions that experience prolonged freezing winters, harmful gases trapped under the ice can accumulate to create toxic conditions for fish.

- Provide an opening in the ice for proper gas exchange and make sure it stays open.
- If you see fish at the surface while the pond is still frozen, **ACT FAST!** Add an [aerator](#) or [water pump](#) near the surface, or do a water change. Your fish can die quickly.
- Never try to physically break the ice to create an opening. Instead, melt a hole in the ice.
- Place [aerators](#) or other devices close to the water surface to prevent ice formation.
- Prevent snow from piling too high on the frozen pond surface so you can *safely* find and maintain [de-icing equipment](#). Keep them from being covered



Tip

Keep a hole in the ice without putting a hole in your wallet. The [Pond Breather](#) works down to

during heavy snowfall.

- Plan for any renovations or improvements for the coming spring. Consider installing a new [water fountain](#), additional [lighting](#) for your pond, or design a new planting scheme for your pond.

20°F below zero
and only uses 40
watts of energy!

spring

Bringing your pond back to life

Check your [pond filter](#) and [pump](#) and prepare for summer. Once spring arrives and water temperatures are above



45°F, you will want to get your filtration system started.

- Reassemble the filtration system and start it up. Check for leaks and proper flow rate.
- Jump start your biological filtration with [bacterial additives](#) to replace those lost over the winter.
- Measure water parameters and monitor the development of nitrifying bacteria in your biological filtration system with a [good test kit](#).
- Have a [pond aerator](#) handy to promote proper gas

summer

Simplify algae control and enjoy your outdoor space

Keep in mind that increased sunlight, higher organic levels, and rising water temperature create ideal conditions for



[aggressive algae growth](#).

- To keep your pond cool and well oxygenated, consider adding a [waterfall](#), [fountain](#), or [aerator](#). Higher oxygen levels mean less algae!
- Add aquatic plants such as [lilies](#), [parrot's feather](#), [water lettuce](#), and [water hyacinths](#) as a natural algae control and to help provide shade and keep water cooler.
- Switch to a [staple](#) or [growth food](#) when water temperatures remain above 70°F.

exchange. Unseasonably warm spring days can encourage abrupt nitrifying bacterial activity that can rapidly deplete dissolved oxygen levels in your pond.

- Get your [UV clarifier system](#) up and running to keep your water crystal clear

Tip

Combat spring green! Place [barley straw](#) in a container of moving water inside your home, 6 weeks ahead of time so it will be primed when you are ready to open your pond.

throughout the spring and summer season.

- Get those green thumbs wet. Early spring is the best time to [repot pond plants](#). Add [fertilizer](#) to [water lilies](#) to give them a good start.
- Start feeding pond fish [easier-to-digest, wheat germ food](#) when water temperature stays consistently above 50°F.

- Give your fish just enough food that they can finish within a few minutes and remove any uneaten food.
- Discourage mosquitoes from breeding by providing [good water movement](#) and preventing stagnant water.

- Replace [chemical filter media](#) such as [activated carbon](#) on

Tip

Add [snails](#) and [shrimp](#) to keep algae cleaned off rocks and [liner](#).

- a regular basis and use products designed to eliminate [phosphate](#), the main algal nutrient.
- Consider using products containing the active ingredient [Bti \(*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*\)](#) to safely control mosquito populations.