

# 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 a regular basis and use products designed to eliminate [phosphate](#), the main algal nutrient.

### Tip

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

- Consider using products containing the active ingredient [Bti \(\*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis\*\)](#) to safely control mosquito populations.