

# Easy Pond Maintenance

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



The key to a low-maintenance pond or water garden is planning. How difficult will it be to maintain? If you follow a few simple guidelines, your maintenance requirements should be minimal.

## Location, location, location

**Install your pond in a highly visible location.** The old adage "Out of sight, out of mind" applies here. If your pond is hidden from view, you'll be much less likely to regularly care for it and its inhabitants.

**Locate your pond in an area that allows water to drain away from it.**

Ground runoff can cause major pond water quality issues because of lawn fertilizers, pesticides, and other ground contaminants. Also, note the accessibility of services such as electricity and water. If these services are not already near your pond construction site, you may need professional installation help.



## Cut down on cleaning

**Plan to use easily accessible filters** such as pressurized or gravity filters when mapping out your filtration system. These [external filters](#), designed with maintenance ease in mind, simplify cleaning through quick access. A [skimmer filter](#) pulls surface debris such as leaves and traps it in a debris basket or net, which you can easily remove and empty. The addition of [bottom drain\(s\)](#) aids in the removal of debris that has settled on the bottom of the pond.

**Use pond plants to help improve water quality.** They compete with algae for nutrients and help shade the water surface from direct sunlight, which also helps limit algae growth. Visit [LiveAquaria.com](#) for all of your planting options.

## Maintain pristine water quality

If you haven't already done so, **consider a waterfall or fountain** like the [Complete Pond Fountain Set](#). Both waterfalls and fountains add surface agitation to your pond, which, in turn, adds valuable oxygen. Ponds high in oxygen have less algae; better fish growth and color; and more effective biological filters, since beneficial bacteria need oxygen for metabolic processes.



If you'll keep fish in your pond, **take care not to overstock.** Estimate 1"-2" of fish per square foot of water surface area as a stocking measure. Although this formula works for small to medium fish, it is inadequate for larger fish. For example, a 30" koi can produce more than ten times the waste produced by 15- 2" koi.

**Do not overfeed your fish.** Feed only the amount they consume in 5 minutes. This helps keep your system balanced and your water clean.

When correctly planned, your pond or water garden requires only occasional cleaning, as well as infrequent equipment and water level checks. You'll spend less time on maintenance and much more time enjoying your backyard sanctuary.