

Bring Your Family Together
with a Backyard that ROCKS!

Above AND Beyond



Courtesy Sharkline Pools



Courtesy Doughboy Pools

It's the weekend:

your husband is playing golf, your daughter is at a sleepover and your son is hanging with his “buds,” wherever that is. You are all alone on the weekend, and feeling sorry for yourself won't change anything. Discover what pool owners have known for years: a fun backyard brings your family home and makes your backyard the center of their social lives for years to come! Your husband will be anxious to get home after his game, sleepovers will be at your house and you'll actually know *who* the “buds” are because they'll be in your backyard. Having a pool makes it happen. So what do you look for? Here's what a few moms have told us:

Janice Lawson Denver, Colo. “I was secretly jealous of my neighbor's inground pool but I didn't want the expense and maintenance hassle of owning my own pool. After doing some online research through POOLSEARCH.ORG I became a more informed buyer. I discovered a lot of new things that directly addressed my concerns. As a result, we bought an aboveground pool that could be buried to act just like an inground pool without voiding its lifetime warranty. We actually saved thousands of dollars compared to what my neighbor paid!

Our city sprays for West Nile disease and the pesticides float down into my neighbor's pool, leaving a nasty murky film and making it difficult for her to keep her pool water clean. I don't have that problem with our pool. It came with a special water-treatment system that automatically removes bacteria, pesticides and scum. Even more, it saves me money by reducing the amount of chemicals we need for our pool by almost 80 percent. It also came with an automatic pool vacuum that sweeps up for me and keeps the dirt and debris out of the pool. I learned that

the size of the skimmer basket (not the skimmer hole) is what's important—the larger it is, the less time I have to spend cleaning the bugs and leaves out of it. The manufacturer of my pool (Doughboy) thought of everything to keep my pool inexpensive and its maintenance to a minimum.”

It's More Than Fun. It's Healthy for Your Family!

Approximately one third of children (and most dads) are overweight and half of those are obese. Obesity in children and adolescents is a serious issue with many health and social consequences. Children are spending more time in front of the television and computer and less time outside getting physical activity and fresh air. Many parents are rightly concerned that their children may be too chubby or overweight. They look for specific answers for prevention. Owning a pool can help. Just 30 minutes of playing in the pool can burn up to 400 calories. Your kids will have a blast splashing around in their new pool and will never know it is exercise.

Kathryn Siler Memphis, Tenn. “We've had one of those cheap, blue, ring, blow-up pools that we got at the local store-mart a couple of years ago. My kids were in it every day the first season we had it, but this past year they got kind of bored with the size, then the filter broke and none of the store-marts in town had a replacement in stock. I bought one over the internet—it broke a few weeks later so we gave up, drained the pool and stored it for the season. Then just recently I read a report by a leading consumer group stating that that type of pool was one of the eight most dangerous things you can buy your children. Needless to say, I'm “through with blue!” I started researching “real pools” at “real pool stores.” I found out that aboveground pools are not only affordable, but some can also be partially buried to fit into our sloped backyard.

At one pool dealer, I discovered Doughboy's eXtreme Entertainment system. With this system, we instantly had a backyard full of entertainment with lights, fountains, waterfalls and a surround sound system that were all part of the pool. My kids love splashing around in the fountains and jamming out to their favorite tunes while swimming in the pool. My husband and I enjoy the romantic lighting and listening to the waterfalls while relaxing in our pool on summer nights. Now I have to beg the kids to get out of the pool, and our backyard is not only fun and entertaining again—it's also romantic!”

A History of Innovations

In 1945, aboveground pools forever changed backyard family entertainment. Since then, numerous innovations have continued to solve the problems and challenges associated with owning a pool. Today, aboveground pools feature levels of automation and entertainment that go beyond even their inground counterparts, encompassing automatic vacuums, automatic chemical balancers, built-in fountains and lights and even surround sound systems. Innovations like space-saving side support systems (sometimes



Courtesy Esther Williams Swimming Pools



Courtesy Trevi Pools



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called Com-Pac Supports) help accommodate larger pools in today's smaller backyards, giving you more pool to swim in. Going even further, at least one manufacturer uses advanced expandable-liner technology to create a deep swimming area (up to 7 feet deep) adding to the fun your pool will provide.

Advances in strength are also significant. A common complaint with aboveground pools is the weaknesses of the top rails that don't stand up to kids' rough treatment. Even though you buy a nice ladder for your pool, when the ball bounces out of the pool, kids are going to take the most direct route to go get it: They grab onto the top rail and pull themselves over the wall. Typically that leaves you with bent top rails on your formerly pretty pool. Tougher rails are available, but that is typically a key cost-cutting trick used on less-expensive pools—don't save money on a cheap-quality pool only to be left with an eyesore not covered by warranty.

Shape choices used to be only round, normally from 12 feet to 30 feet or more. Now it is possible to buy huge rectangular and oval aboveground pools. High-tech materials were incorporated into pool walls in the 90s, enabling aboveground pools to grow in size and gallonage. All for a lot less money than the cost of an inground pool. Plus, aboveground pools can be drained and moved. An inground pool cannot.

Piecing it All Together

Aboveground pools lend themselves well to the do-it-yourselfer. By following the directions for installation, a handy homeowner can set the pool up in a weekend. Most pool professionals suggest that a seasoned installer be used to avoid less obvious installation pitfalls such as nut grass that can bore its way through the bottom of the liner and ruin an otherwise good day. Or, from making the ultimate faux pas of placing the pool over the septic tank. These installers use power equipment that makes the back-breaking job of leveling the ground quickly and precisely, and they know how to avoid problems.

Since aboveground pools are bought as a package, many pools are installed without building permits. They are, therefore, not inspected for compliance with barrier codes common with inground pools. A person who buys an aboveground pool should carefully read the instruction book that is required by law to be included with the pool. The sheer height of the pool walls, for example, meet some safety codes but only if steps and ladders are removed. Pools installed adjacent to decks should be treated like an inground pool with fencing or automatic door closers with high latches.

Lighting, often thought of as an unnecessary frill, is critical to aboveground pool safety. Since aboveground pools tend to be dark in color, it is difficult to see nighttime swimmers, and pool lighting becomes a necessary component of the pool. Exterior lighting is also important to prevent accidental falls and to assist the adults supervising children in the pool.

Once set up and full of water, the pool is tended just like any other pool. Water chemistry is tested routinely during the swim-

ming season, filters are cleaned as necessary, and debris is removed when it is required. Vinyl liners by nature are not porous, so tending chemicals is much easier than in a plaster or marcite pool.

You should expect a life of 15 years or more from the structure. A liner can last seven years or more with reasonable care. Most liners use a 20-mil standard for thickness that is close to that of six sheets of paper. The thickness of your pool liner is an important consideration and will have a direct impact on the life of your swimming pool. A 20 mil liner can last seven years or more with reasonable care. Some manufacturers have begun to install 25 mil liners standard on their pools. While 5 mil may not seem significant, these liners contain 25 percent more UV protection and will last even longer under similar usage, reducing the operating costs over the life of the pool.

The choice of materials for the pool frame is often dictated by the local climate or by the pool budget. Metal frames are common using various methods of avoiding rust. Composites and resinous materials have gained increasing popularity in recent years. The number of protective coatings, the thickness of the steel (you can actually feel the difference) and the heaviness of a pool are excellent barometers of quality.

Remember: aboveground pools are intended for swimming and wading only. No aboveground pool should be used for diving. Parents need to stress this fact to their children as well as all visitors, young and old. Basketball, volleyball and other water games are fine so long as they are monitored by a responsible adult outside the pool.

Better for Your Family, More Fun for You!

Today's aboveground pools are exciting, fun and healthy solutions to making your backyard the center of your family's social life. They provide entertainment, exercise, play and more quality family time with one simple purchase. Bring your family home and bring them together in a pool! ●



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Recommended Aboveground Pool Manufacturer

Doughboy Recreational
877-228-4586
doughboy-pools.com



Other Manufacturers

Artesian Pools, LLC
410-878-7665
swimartesian.com

Delair Group, LLC
800-235-0185
delairgroup.com

Kayak Pool Corporation
800-639-5292
kayakpools.com

Trevi Pools
888-777-0447
trevi.net

Vogue Pool Products
800-363-3232
zodiacpools.com

Wilkes Pools
888-494-5537
wilkespools.com