

HOW-TO Maintain & Service A Water Garden Pond

The future maintenance and service requirements of a water garden pond should be important considerations when designing the water garden pond shape, size, gallons, filtration, location, etc. Maintaining a water garden pond can be as simple or as time consuming as the chosen lay out of the pond design, the pond filtration system installed and the water garden pond construction method used.

The pond maintenance steps and schedules will vary from pond to pond due to the initial pond construction details as previously mentioned and also because of the different climatic and environmental conditions which water garden ponds are exposed to. These environmental conditions can greatly vary from city to city and region to region. These varying conditions include but are not limited to the existing amount or lack of:

- Sun
- Shade
- Dissolved oxygen levels
- Rain
- Pollen
- Debris, etc.

This is why we suggest that the information within these pages be used as a guide and not as the only way to maintain every water garden pond.

The water garden pond maintenance steps and schedules listed below will work as a starting guide for most water garden ponds whether you are here in Central Florida, Orlando, or most anywhere else in the continental USA.

HOW-TO maintain and service the Mechanical Skimmer:

Skimmer:

1. Turn off pump.
2. Lift the skimmer lid and check for visitors (fish, frogs, etc.)
3. Remove skimmer debris net/basket, pad/brushes and any debris that might be inside.
4. Rinse the debris net/basket and pad/brushes with a hose.
5. Check the pump intake for obstructions and clean as needed.
6. Replace the pad/brushes and debris net/basket back into place.
7. Turn pump back on.

This process should be done a minimum of 1 time per week on outdoor systems. Every water garden pond will vary due to the type and quantity of nearby trees and other factors. Indoor systems could go on a bi-weekly schedule. If one sees that debris is not accumulating after the first week, then go on a bi-weekly schedule. If bi-weekly is not dirty go every three weeks or on a monthly basis. **DO NOT** go over a monthly cleaning schedule. Each system is different and the amount of debris will vary from water garden

pond to water garden pond, so judge accordingly. Replace the debris net/basket and skimmer pad/brushes promptly when they begin to appear worn. Not replacing worn equipment could cause a piece to break-off and cause the pump to get jammed and burn out.

HOW-TO Maintain and service a Biological Waterfall Filter:

Biological Waterfall Filter:

1. Turn off pump.
2. Fill a 5-gallon bucket with pond water.
3. Remove biological media bag from the biological waterfall filter and place it inside of the 5-gallon bucket. (Biological media bag must stay wet)
4. Remove the filter pad(s) from inside the biological waterfall filter.
5. Rinse filter pad(s) with a hose. (Will need pressure to clean thoroughly)
6. Replace filter pads. Put the top filter on the bottom. (Keep alternating your filters every time you rinse them.)
7. DO NOT rinse the biological media bag with chlorinated city water while cleaning. Aggressively stir the biological media bag inside the 5-gallon bucket in order to remove the accumulated muck and debris. (You want to get most of it off to allow for the water to evenly flow through the media, but still leave some beneficial bacteria on the media to keep your biological waterfall filter alive)

This process should be done once every 1 to 2 months depending on the amount of debris, fish, plants and any other source of waste that is in your pond. Forget that you were told that this could be done once a year, this is far from the truth. It is very important to always keep the biological media bag wet while cleaning the filters. Chlorinated water and/or the biological media bag drying will kill all the bacteria colonized in the bag which would cause havoc with the water quality and clarity.

Water Garden Pond General Maintenance:

1. Always keep a bottle of de-chlorinator and ammonia remover handy in case of emergencies.
2. Do not over-stock your pond with fish. As they multiply give some away to friends or call your local koi club for assistance.
3. Fish should be fed a maximum of once per day or every other day depending on the amount and size of the fish. Always feed in the same area so fish will get accustomed to the time and place of feeding. DO NOT over feed as doing so will create a lot of solid and biological waste.

4. Lilies should be fertilized bi-weekly or monthly depending on variety and weather conditions.
5. A water change of 20% of pond water should be replaced monthly for optimum water quality. Deduct, in inches, your water loss due to evaporation and splashing from the 20% needed and then do the water change at the end of the month.
6. If algae problems arise, try to combat it with plants and natural treatments. Chemicals used in your pond will sometimes kill your bacteria colony and the whole process of rebuilding a bacteria colony must be started again.
7. Trim plants, blooms, leaves as they die to remove them from the pond immediately. This also is a main cause of algae.
8. Cut aquatic plants back at the roots in order to prevent them from spreading all over the pond. Aquatic plants are very aggressive.
9. Stir the pond bottom once a month to get the debris on the bottom to make it into the skimmer. When you do this step make sure to keep up with cleaning the skimmer net/brushes and skimmer pad.
10. Add beneficial bacteria as required by your water garden pond.
11. Check UV bulb for working condition and replace as recommended by the manufacturer. See [HOW-TO Maintain & Service An Ultraviolet Sterilization Unit \(UV Light\)](#).
12. Remove and clean UV light unit's quartz sleeve and clean. Replace when clean and check for leaks before installing the bulb(s).
13. Clean underwater light lenses and replace any worn out bulbs. See [HOW-TO Select & Install Underwater Lights](#).
14. Restack loose stones in and around the water garden pond.
15. Re-shift gravel at the bottom of the pond and plant shelves as needed to cover any exposed liner, concrete, etc.

By following the steps listed above on how to maintain & service your water garden pond, you will enjoy your water garden pond more as it will be a place to sit back, relax and enjoy!