

10 Mistakes People Make When Buying a Swimming Pool!

You have decided to “dive” into shopping for a pool. Your new pool can be very rewarding. Take the extra time to educate yourself before making your investment decision. Look for companies that have the heart of a teacher and not a pushy sales person. Before you start wading through the phonebook or the internet, and have dozens of contractors scheduled to come and give you a free estimate for your swimming pool construction, read the following ten tips. These tips could save you some frustration, money, and time.

- 1. Shopping before you have an understanding of your budget.**
Understand what swimming pools costs. They range from mid \$20k to as much as \$200K. On average, a swimming pool with nice amenities will cost between \$30k-60k.
- 2. Not asking enough questions.**
Do not assume every builder is going to educate you or has the ability to do so. The more you know and understand the better buying decision you will make. By being more knowledgeable about what you want helps you and your pool contractor. Do your homework. Your resources are endless, so use them! *Some pool contractors ask you to pull your own electrical and building permits. This is usually because they do not have the appropriate licenses and/or insurances that local codes require. This should raise a red flag. BEWARE – if you pull the permits you are liable for damages or injuries. If their bobcat runs into your home and collapses a rear corner or if someone gets seriously hurt, you are liable.*
- 3. Paralysis by analysis.**
This is when someone gets 10 or more estimates for a swimming pool and then cannot make a decision because all the information gets confusing. Do your research and get 3 or 4 estimates from **reputable** swimming pool companies. Then make your decision and go with it.
- 4. Not checking out the experience level, history, or background of a contractor.**
What makes them qualified to build swimming pools? Do they have any professional certifications or formal training? Consider the saying, "If you think the cost of a Professional is expensive, wait until you hire an Amateur." Check online with the Better Business Bureau for complaints. Remember this is not always the main thing because there are some unjust complaints that are filed against companies. If there is a pattern of complaints, you should beware!
- 5. Shopping based on price alone.**
Usually if a deal seems too good to be true, it usually is! If you shop for price alone you are destined to be disappointed. Bottom line: you usually get what you pay for. Beware of bait and switch tactics used in advertising.
- 6. Shopping over the phone for a pool.**
It is impossible and a waste of time. Visit the swimming pool builder or have them come to your home to provide you with an estimate. Visiting a contractor's place of business will tell you a lot about the type of business it is. Also check out their website.
- 7. Assuming swimming pools cost less to build in the wintertime.**
The pool industry has seen increases in steel prices, concrete shortages, gas increases, and insurance premium hikes. Pools don't get cheaper as time goes on; swimming pools will never be less expensive than they are today.
- 8. Not reading contracts.**
It is important to make sure you understand what you are getting. If a turn key project is what you are wanting, make sure that all phases are covered. Is electrical, concrete, gravel backfill, and hauling remaining dirt included? Make sure everything is in writing. If something is promised to you verbally, make sure it is in writing. It is very difficult to cancel a contract after 3-day rescission period. The contract should protect you **AND** the contractor.
- 9. Focusing on the aesthetics and not the mechanics of the project.**
Swimming pools are custom construction projects and are built by many individual trades and pool contractors with different standards. All pools are not built the same. With a swimming pool much of what you do not see will impact the cost of pool ownership. Hydraulic design, flow rates, pipe size, pump and filter types, chemical management systems, and many other factors will make a difference in the ability of your swimming pool to stay clean and sanitized. These choices will affect your monthly operational costs – understand them.
- 10. Not thinking about safety.**
Swimming pools can be a great place to relax, exercise, and just enjoy the outdoors. They can also be dangerous. Make sure you know what your city requires for barriers and fencing. More importantly, make sure you protect the ones you care for, and protect the ones that cannot protect themselves.