



## **Questions & Answers**

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General Process...

Scheduling

Changes

- **I have many concerns about the process, who do I talk to?**

We understand your concerns, however you hired a company that manages and checks the job continually. We spend hours detailing the plan and we then follow through during the construction process with checklists. We have put together the following list of questions that many previous clients have asked. Please read through all the questions and you will probably get the answers you're looking for, if not, don't hesitate to contact your job foreman.

- **How does the payment system work, are there late fees?**

Payments are due as each phase occurs, as noted on your contract, usually excavation, gunite, deck forms, and when the pool is filled. We will send you courtesy statements, however the payment is due even if you do not have the statement. Payments should be made the day the phase occurs. You can mail or call us to pick up your payment. **If payments are made later than seven days past the phase, they are considered late.** Changes and extras are due at the signing of the change order, or as noted differently on the change order. Interior finish will not be scheduled until all outstanding payments, including change orders, are received in full.

- **Do I have to worry about your company standards when you fail a building inspection?**

Absolutely not, different inspectors in the same area may pass or fail the same item. Also, different areas have local codes that only apply in that location. Some locations will fail an inspection because the owner did not leave a note allowing the inspector to enter the property on that day. We often find inspectors misreading codes or they do not understand the products we use. "Ultimate Pools" thoroughly inspects our own jobs according to the codes in your county. Remember inspectors do not take responsibility for anything and do not carry insurance.

- **I want to know when each phase is going to happen, can I call and find out?**

You will receive a laminated schedule that gives an approximate time table. We could be ahead or fall behind that schedule, due to weather conditions or inspections. Our goal is to complete your project within the contracted dates (terms per the contract). Our schedules are based on working days as stated in the contract with extensions for weather; for each inclimate day, add two working days (hot, cold, windy, wet, rain, etc.). Please remember that issues like equipment breakdown, etc. will slow your job down as well. We can not promise to finish your job early, but we continually work to move the schedule along faster.

- **What time will workers be at my house?**

Different phases start at different times, but in general, the hotter it is the earlier the work will start. Be prepared for workers to be at your house at 7:00a.m. (please make sure your yard is Dog free), but some crews may arrive as early as 6:15am. **CREWS WILL NOT CALL AHEAD OR COME TO YOUR DOOR.** Some crews do several jobs in one day, so if you are expecting a phase to occur, do not be surprised if the work does not start until the afternoon. Please do not request or make changes or additions directly to any workers on the site. **ALL CHANGES MUST BE DONE IN WRITING.**

- **I want to make changes, who do I talk to?**

**Once the contract is signed all details are now bound by your signature.**

First, remember that all changes must be in writing and must be signed. (Faxes sent by you with notes on the plan and signatures are great).

The following may apply when changing orders:

1. All changes made verbally may not be considered a change.
2. Changes must be paid at the time of acceptance.
3. Re-Design of a pool shape at pre-site will be a minimum of \$250, plus \$65 per hour for the second pre-site meeting to get approval on the new plan and repaint the new plan.

- **Will there be any hidden costs?**

No, all potential items are listed in your contract and are not hidden. Additional costs could be: hard dirt, sub surface water, fences and/or building requirements. Most additional costs are extra items that the owner wishes for us to do; via a change order.

- **What happens if I don't like something or want it replaced?**

We follow many standards and procedures which are based on years of experience, knowledge, and training. Many construction procedures involve complex chemical material and environment issues. This determines the final and precise outcome of a particular product or material. There may be many industry acceptable variations which could be different than what a customer may have anticipated. When our customers show a concern about a product, we will evaluate the product ourselves and explain what the industry standards are by presenting facts. The next step would be to have an industry trained representative evaluate the product.

- **When do we make color selections?**

Please call for your selection appointment immediately (within seven days of contract signing.) Your selection must be done at our office or with a sales consultant, not by catalog. All color selections should be done as soon as possible to help ease any potential back order issues that may occur. After you sign for color selection, materials are ordered and paper work is processed. Request to change color selection that is signed and approved will incur a fee of \$125 for the change. Restocking, and shipping costs will be additional. Some products can not be restocked and must be paid in full.

- **Will I need to be there when workers are at my house?**

You will not be required to be present during the construction, unless you made a prearranged request for a specific item. We will contact you for any items which we will need your signed approval. If you have any questions about the work please call the job foreman; the office staff will not be able to help you with construction issues. Remember the gates must be unlocked during the construction process and for thirty days after the pool is filled with water. Weather, which causes delays, will increase the possible lag time between phases.

- **Why must I have door alarms and reverse gates?**

One of the most popular ways to meet the state building code "barrier requirements" is to install door alarms and reverse gates. Our representatives will install the alarms and they will be checked by inspectors in some cities. (Some pools may pass by fence or Auto Covers alone.)

This is a state code, and is required to be met by all pool owners, even if they don't have children. The alarms are loud and very annoying, but again they are required by the state building code.

No current security alarm system you may have will qualify to meet the barrier code. We will give you the opportunity to choose to install alarms with double stick tape, instead of screws. You will be required to reinstall the alarms if they fall at any time after installation **if** you selected the double stick tape method.

- **What about my fence meeting the barrier code?**

You are responsible for your existing fence meeting the barrier code. Code requires a 5 foot minimum high fence that cannot be climbed from the outside by a 5 year old child; no space or opening wider than 4 inches vertically; no space under the fence greater than 2 inches to dirt and 4 inches to concrete; and no loose fence boards (special no climbed fences, pool barrier fences, some chain link fences, and some wrought iron fences may also pass code).

- **Fence Replacement**

Fences will be replaced in a similar manor and material to what was there. We do not stain fences or paint fences. We only work on traditional wood fences, we do not work on iron, chain link or vinyl fences. If included in the contract, we will replace fences removed for access. If the original fence has split or rotten wood we will purchase new material and charge the owner.

Starting out...

Pre site

Excavation

Dogs

- **Why have a pre-site, I already have a signed plan?**

Many people have trouble visualizing. At pre-site we paint out the pool location to help you see it (it is normal for you to think the pool appears smaller than you may have visualized it to be). We use marking paint in a bright color to mark where the pool and deck will be. The markings are only for your visual examination and will not be what we use for construction. Please remove all personal items and anything you do not want painted from the pool area. Please pick up all dog waste, this is a serious matter that gets all over our tools and tape measures. We are not able to pre-site a yard that has dog waste.

Pre-site is an important part of the construction process as it is your opportunity to fine tune the plan and make very minor changes. We will not re-design the pool without additional cost to you as we already have your signed agreement to build the design.

- **Can my dog be in the yard during the construction?**

No! The construction zone is an unsafe place for pets. Please keep dogs in a locked area, such as in a cage, kennel, garage, or inside the house. We will not chase loose dogs or assume responsibility for their loss. We cannot perform work with uncontrolled pets in the working area, this includes friendly pets too. We all love our pets and most of us do not truly know how they will act when we are not around. If you put your dog outside at night please clean up after them in the morning.

Dogs can be a health hazard to our workers and loose dogs will be a reason for “pull-off”. We will assist you with ideas but suggest your solution be as simple as possible. You will need to do this daily and you may get frustrated putting your dog in for many hours when no one arrives. We understand your concern, but we “fear” for the safety of the dog and for our workers. This must continue for thirty days after the pool has been filled.

- **I have other items to do in my yard; landscaping, fences, and other construction. When can I start?**

No other work can occur during our construction process except drain pipe placement. Ultimate Pools will provide two pipes to all planters and across any concrete section “locked in”. If you have any other construction plans and would like our considerations for the future work, please provide us with a set of written plans (submit at pre-site) so we can coordinate as best as possible. Not telling us what your future plans are may result in additional future expenses for you. If you wish to place drain pipes, you may do so after the deck forms are set, please let us know if you plan to do this.

- **Can I use your open trenches for my pipes?**

Yes, you may install drainage pipes in our trenches. Drainage pipes may be placed after plumbing, steel, and electrical is complete. Drainage pipes can be placed on top of our pipes prior to inspection (do not cover with dirt). Owners electrical, sewer and drinking water pipes will require a separate permit. No, we do not guarantee your pipes against damage, flooding from rain water, filling with mud or crushing from equipment brought in later. After the pool has been gunited you may find gunite in the trenches and on the pipes under the areas where concrete decking will be placed. We cannot guarantee against this.

- **Why do you not replace or fix damages to concrete and landscape from dig access?**

We, as all companies, base our prices on jobsites that are clear of concrete, plants, or landscape; we do not set cost aside for repairs. Ultimate Pools is proud to be one of the few companies in the area to cover lawn access with plywood. Though some damage may still occur, plywood dramatically reduces damages to lawns. Landscape, plants, sprinklers, lights, bark, stones, gravel drip irrigation, and mow strips will be crushed and destroyed by the weight of the equipment. The dryer the soil, the less the damage. Please follow our recommendations on turning sprinklers off in the dig access area. You should check to see if your existing landscape drain pipes have been crushed or buried as a result of excavation; running water through them to check the flow is the most common way. If you are not sure of how to do this we can refer you to a vendor who can.

- **Can I get a copy of the construction plan?**

We will always refer back to the plan you signed at contract as this is to scale and is the official plan. We do not have plans that show the location of the plumbing and electrical, which is the most common reason it is asked for, however, you may contact the office if you feel you need an updated plan.

- **Did they forget the steel in my steps and benches?**

Steps and benches are not structural items and do not require steel. The steps and benches will look like the plan after gunite; this includes Acapulco benches.

- **Should I worry about the equipment being outside?**

When the equipment is first delivered it will be in cardboard boxes and should remain in the backyard. If delivery left any boxes in the front yard let us know and we will move them to the back or side yard. Please do not put the equipment in your garage, it is designed for being outdoors at anytime.

- **A lot of paperwork was left outside, should I bring it indoors to help protect it?**

No, there is no need to. We will send you all new manufacture warranty paperwork when the job has finished. We do not care for or need to protect the paper work sent with the equipment.

- **What should I do after my pool is excavated?**

Verify that excavation is complete then check all your sprinklers for operations. Broken sprinklers can be repaired by you or you may request a quote from us for repair. Use a hose nozzle to wash excess dirt on the lawn into the soil. Soak lawn well for several days and water any plants that were moved as needed. PLEASE DO NOT turn sprinkler timer or water on in backyard, it may flood your pool!

- **Will I have to be concerned about drainage in my back yard?**

Yes, most water will drain off of pool deck into your yard. Roof spill-off should also drain into gutters. Water runoff from sidewalks and concrete are not allowed to drain onto neighbors property. The drain channels "Ultimate Pools" install do not connect into any drain. Connection & landscape drains can be done for an additional cost. The pool does not have drain connections of any kind, if you do have existing conditions that drain water onto your neighbor's property, you may be required by the Building Department to correct it. We will review these items at pre-site.

- **What preparation is done on the day of the dig?**

Our prices are based on us removing one eight foot section of a standard wood fence to allow us to drive a bobcat into the yard. We, unlike many companies, cover the grass with plywood but offer no guarantee of not damaging the grass, mow strip, and/or area in the access. Owners themselves, or landscapers hired by the owner, should help protect any existing conditions they may wish to salvage.

# **Gunite**

- **What is Guniting?**

Guniting is the concrete that is sprayed to create the structure of your pool. The interior finish (plaster or pebble) will be the last thing that is installed.

- **When can I walk on the Guniting?**

12 hours after the crew is finished.

- **There are rough spots on my Guniting, is that what my finish will look like?**

No, the finish bonds better to be a rough guniting, impressions will fill in. All plaster and pebble will have normal application variations. (Holes will also fill in.)

- **I am unsure of how to water the Guniting.**

Start watering guniting the next morning following the application of guniting. Do not use a sprinkler or spray nozzle, use a hose that reaches all areas of the pool. You may use a thumb or forefinger to create a thicker spray. Start at the top edge and spray until the guniting no longer absorbs or soaks up the water. Move around the top edge soaking all the raised areas and the tops of the steps and benches, then spray the walls and the bottom of the pool. This should take no longer than 8-12 minutes. Water 7-10 days, three times a day. Watering can be done as little as once or twice a day in the winter during colder or rainy weather; we will advise you. (Ten days over 90 degrees.) It's normal to see a white "bleed out" and some cracking. It is also okay for some water to collect in the pool, but please do not use sprinklers because it may cause the pool to fill up. Do not water freshly installed tile, grout or brick as you may rinse the mortar away, skip until the next day.

# **Concrete Decking**

- **What will happen after the concrete decking is poured?**

Please stay off of the concrete for two days. If you have salt finish, the salt will be washed off no more than one and a half days after pour (we will do the initial wash off). Owners should continue to rinse two more times after that, it's good to wash off residual efflorescence and salts. Avoid leaving standing water in planters around concrete.

Several days after the concrete is poured we will pre-plaster the pool, at that time we pump and clean out the pool, cut off protruding pipes, clean up debris, and do minor grading. If included in the contract we will also reverse gates, put up fences and install alarms. We install door alarms if you are home, and if not, we will call for an appointment. Once this is all complete we will call for an inspection. If it is required to check alarms, it is only done once. We will contact you if it is necessary to coordinate for someone to be home. When alarms need to be checked inspectors do not make appointments for a specific time, but a time range is given. Appointment time range can only be made the day of the appointment. We cannot schedule interior finish without the pre-plaster inspection (alarms or letter). Please read the introduction letter explaining inspections.

- **I want to install an arbor or patio cover; will you do the footing for me?**

Yes, provided you have taken out a permit and given us the plans three weeks prior to the deck being poured. This will require an accurate set of plans showing exact locations of footings; we will not set wet anchors in the concrete at anytime. You cannot dig a footing without an approval and permitted set of plans.

- **Should I wet the dirt prior to pouring the concrete?**

We will contact you if this is required. (Special circumstances only.)

- **Should I wash the salt off the deck?**

The initial wash off should be done by us within one and a half days of pour. Please stay off the deck for the first 48 hours. Three days after the pour we need you to rinse the deck two or more times to help remove the last of the salt residue. During colder weather a white residue will show on the deck, it is not salt, it will require a broom scrubbing with water to remove.

- **What can I expect from my concrete?**

All concrete will have color variations, and concrete will cure differently or unevenly depending on weather, temperature, and soil conditions. Concrete requires twenty-eight days to reach its maximum hardness and should not be judged for color until the fifth week. Longer cure time in cool weather or rain; winter dry time takes a minimum of 3 months. All concrete shrinks and therefore must crack; so expect your concrete to crack. We hope to divert cracks with deep joint expansions, however there is no guarantee of that. **Cracks with the width smaller than a nickel are normal and will not be considered flaws.** White efflorescence must be brushed off with a broom and water.

- **They just set the forms for my deck, what will my finish look like?**

We will inspect the forms and call for a building inspection. We also have a pre-deck approval form we need you to sign to assure us that you have checked the position of the forms and approve any variation that may have occurred from the plan. This is your time to review color, type of deck, drainage, and also to double check all items on this form. There is no pour scheduled until all documents are signed off, so your assistance in expediting the form is important in maintaining the momentum of the schedule, this is also when the deck set payment is due (no major changes are allowed at this point).

- **Can I put things on my concrete deck after the pour?**

No, do not put any patio furniture, hoses, chairs, floor mats, etc. on the concrete after it is poured. Such items may retain dye and will cause discoloration where they are set. Wait thirty days minimum to put anything on concrete.

- **Can I fill my planters and start landscaping?**

No, please wait until after the pool is filled and running.

- **When will they clean the water and debris out of the pool?**

At the end of the process the pool will be cleaned twice prior to interior finish.

**Waterfalls**

**And**

**Water Features**

- **I am really concerned about my waterfall. I want it to look a certain way, but don't know how to describe it. Can I be there to tell them how to build it?**

We understand your concern, however, you have already selected your rock type and size of the waterfall. The assembly of a waterfall is an artistic choice of placement of a varied size and configuration of rocks. This process has been shortened through the training of the waterfall builder to create a design based on his experience. You have asked for a price to build a certain size waterfall as specified by the contract. If you would like to make selections, coordinate positions and choose rock shapes, you must understand that the process no longer is something that we can have a fixed price attached to. We will gladly allow you to select and position the rocks based on an hourly charge of \$300 per hour (in addition to the contract quote). We have found that most owners will find it much more difficult than they would have imagined. To avoid placement charges we recommend that you give us an accurate description in writing of what you would like to have. Please use words, dimensions, and descriptions that give a clear and accurate picture of what you would like to have. This must fall within the size parameters set by the contract.

- **How big and what color will the rocks be?**

The typical rock size we intend to use in the building of your waterfall and all rock in the bond beam will be from 12-14 inches, larger and smaller rocks may be used in positioning and fill in. The use of larger rocks is available, subject to accessibility by the equipment and possibly cranes needed to maneuver the rocks into position. (Obviously this is a dramatic increase in cost and is priced on a per rock basis.) All rocks will have variation in color, texture, shape and size. We do not have control on how Mother Nature selects to enhance the natural beauty of rocks. We do not warrant rocks for color, metals or minerals content, or the long term effect of the sun and chemicals.

- **We want to see our water feature and lights, when can we use them?**

Lights are operational but you will not be able to operate them until after the Pool University Training. Water features require training to operate and will be shown to you at this appointment. We do suggest limited operation in the first thirty days to reduce the residual dust from building up on the water feature.

Final Process...

Interior Finish

Filling

Equipment

Running

Training

Care

- **What do I do after my pool has the finish applied?**

The finish crew will place a hose in the pool and start the filling process. Do not turn off the water until full to mid-tile line; DO NOT USE AUTOFILL, you will damage your finish if you use autofill or shut the water off early. Do not allow humans or animals to walk in the pool while filling. You may add extra hoses. Tie a white (no color) rag to the end of a hose, then leave the hose in the deep end of the pool at the bottom and turn on. Do not add extra hoses to color plaster pools, pebble is okay. Once the pool bowl is filled, measure from the tile line to the water. Check it one hour later and calculate approximate fill time based on how much it filled in one hour. Once the pool is filled, call our office and leave a message that the pool is full. Do not attempt to start the equipment and do not install pool cleaner as you will void the interior finish warranty and possibly damage the finish. Do not lock gates. Start brushing as soon as the pool is full (the brush and other tools should be in a box left by us in your back yard, with an extending pole). The filter does not need to be running in order to brush. "Ultimate Pools" will arrive within forty-eight hours of filling to start equipment. On weekend fills to start equipment may not be until Monday or Tuesday.

**Brushing Instructions:**

Plaster pools: Four times a day for seven days, then once a day until the 30<sup>th</sup> day (one time around the pool is one brushing).

Pebble pools: Once per day for a minimum of ten days; thirty days would be great.

Brush from top to bottom including all steps and benches. Pattern brushing from the deep end of the pool to main drains. Children should not brush due to the lack of strength and patience.

Plaster pools will develop a cloud of dust that will obstruct seeing where you brushed; this is normal, remember your pattern.

- **When can we swim and use our spa?**

After the pool is completely filled and chemicals have been added, (owners should know that the plaster dust has never been tested for safety). You may swim when the dust clears, and you decide when it is clear enough. You can use your spa about 10 days after it is filled; this is in order to avoid any damages to the finish from the heat.

- **When will they start the equipment?**.....see top of this page

- **When will the automatic sweep be installed?**

About 10 days after your fill, earlier in some weather. Too early of an installation may damage your finish. Owners should not attempt to install pool cleaners.

- **When will the salt generator be operational?**

Your salt generator is operational 21-30 days after your fill date (chlorine will need to be added until salt is introduced into the pool). We will return to add the salt and instruct you.

- **My deck is splotchy and does not look like the color I picked.**

This is normal, wait until the 5<sup>th</sup> week to judge color (5 -20 weeks in cool weather). If your deck is still splotchy after the 5<sup>th</sup> week, please contact us so we may do an evaluation.

- **Are loose pebbles in the pool normal?**

Yes, this occurs in Pebble pools. Your pool has millions of pebbles and it is normal for a few pebbles to come loose.

- **How much will service cost for my pool?**

Cost of service will be based on where you live, how large your pool is, what surrounds your pool, and how often your pool is used. Contact the office to get more information regarding other services we offer.

- **What is a Pool University?**

Pool University is training you on your equipment, pool maintenance, and care. Plan for about 1-2 hours of training for a pool and 2-4 hours for a pool and spa. Anyone who may call with questions about the pool and its operations must be at the training. Our instructors are expertly trained in equipment and chemical care. Most of the training occurs during the daylight hours, although limited evening and weekend appointments are available. Training is best during normal business hours because we have found late appointments that run 2-4 hours long exhaust our instructor's ability to provide thorough and exciting training, and owners also find themselves tired and in a hurry to attend

to other needs and therefore are not focused when they have “evening” trainings at 5 pm or later. PLEASE PLAN TO SCHEDULE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

- **Why is the pump running so long in my new pool?**

We usually leave your filter pumps running continuously for 3-7 days to allow the dust to be filtered out, after that the filter should be running 8-12 hours depending on the pool and yard. Unfinished back yards or environmental conditions such as wind will require longer filter run times to help reduce staining to interior finish. After the first thirty days the run time can be reduced per our seasonal recommendation.

- **I understand that “Ultimate” does not back fill planters, what should be done to complete landscape and planters?**

“Ultimate Pools” provides a masonry sealer as a first line of defense against landscape water intrusion through Gunitite (rain water is okay). We suggest that owners line all raised planters with heavy plastic and put sprinkler drip mains and light wires in planters before back fill. Placing pressure treated 2x12’s work well if you are trying to keep dirt away from fence. Owners or landscapers should not back fill planters prior to our job completion. Do not pile dirt above the weed board on the fence. If there is not a weed board then you must use retaining boards. “Ultimate Pools” does not include retaining boards, unless purchased additionally.

- **Will they return to show me how to work the Salt Generator?**

Instructions are provided at our Pool University Training, and our written manual also has information. Additional information is on the inside of the generator panel door, and you may go to [www.goldlinecontrols.com](http://www.goldlinecontrols.com) to FAQ and get answers to most of the questions you may have. You may also call the toll free help line for the manufacture of the salt generator. We will return to train if necessary. If you have a Pentair Intellichlor see Pentair website.

- **Can I wait to pay my final payment until everything is 100% complete?**

No, this would void the contract and you could lose your extended services and extended warranties. Remember you have to trust us to warrant the pool in the future. We do understand your concern and we will allow small amounts to be held in lieu of completion of small items. The final payment is due when the pool is filled but we typically do not collect until the pool university.

- **Why do plaster pool finishes need to have the filters cleaned three times a month?**

**THIS APPLIES TO PLASTER POOLS ONLY. FOR OTHER POOL FINISHES CLEANING IS ONLY REQUIRED ONCE.**

The plaster dust will harden on the filters if not cleaned off and will shorten the filter life. Pebble pools only need to be cleaned once in the first month. Backyards with a lot of dust may need to be cleaned more often.