

Painting Pools

PAINTING A SWIMMING POOL

There is a cost to use professional painters but it's well worth it if you're not fully prepared to deal with the process I'm about to explain. Getting it wrong can mean an expensive waste of time and costly materials.

Firstly, we are talking about concrete/ gunite pools. Don't go painting your fibreglass pool because you don't like the colour. It won't work!

Painted concrete/ gunite swimming pools will fade over time. If the problem is only fading and there is no bubbling, cracking or chalky surface, then you may want to try a light acid wash to brighten the paint up. You can enquire about this at your pool shop.

If you have either of these problems, you'll need to consider repainting the pool;

Bubbling

The painted surface has failed and water is getting behind the paint to form bubbles. This is often caused by poor preparation of the surface and is another reason to use a professional!

Crackling

Old paint will naturally flake away but if you have long cracks in your paint, you might have bigger problems with subsidence and cracking in the concrete. Check to make sure there is no movement in the ground or water table problems. No point in painting this pool until you're sure it's stable!

Chalking

Painted surfaces will degrade after some time. If you can rub your fingers over a dry surface and they come away dusty, the paint is nearing the end of its lifespan.

What sort of paint to use

There are three options for pool paint; Epoxy, Rubber Base and Acrylic, **Impa Pool Epoxy** is the only one you should consider. It last the longest, 7-8 years, more durable and stands up well to UV rays, pool cleaners and chemicals. Rubber base paint is cheaper but only lasts 3-5 years. Acrylic paint is really for commercial pools that will be regularly re-painted and lasts only 2-3 years. This is not a job you want to do that often!

HOW TO REPAIR CRACKS IN A POOL

Dry Repair

Step 1

Locate the site of the crack. Use a clean towel to dry the area around the crack and clear away any foreign material that may be present within the crack.

Step 2

Fill the length of the crack with the **Impa Epoxy Grout Filler** (carefully follow product instruction regarding primer application etc.). Use your hands or a trowel to push the epoxy into the crack. Dust the surface of the epoxy with silica sand, then level off the surface of the patch with the trowel. Allow the epoxy to cure overnight before proceeding.

Tip

- Large cracks may require you to install special metal staples at various points over the crack before applying the epoxy. These staples come packaged with templates designed to help you mark drilling holes for installation.

HOW TO PAINT THE POOL

If you're painting a new pool, the concrete must be left to cure for at least a month. The surface then needs to be cleaned of any residual chemicals, dust, grease and other traces that will undermine the paint's adhesion to the concrete. A roof wash is suitable for this job.

If the surface is too smooth, the paint won't adhere properly. Prepare it by lightly blasting or grinding to improve adhesion.

- For pre-painted concrete pools, firstly, you need to check what sort of paint the pool is already coated with (**see testing method on TDS of Impa Pool Epoxy**). Epoxy paint will not cover a rubber based paint.
- Once the pool has been fully drained and cleaned of any debris, start to remove all loose paint with a high pressure water blaster. Don't use the electric ones in a pool! A petrol powered water blaster with at least 2000 psi of pressure should do the job.
- Remove any loose concrete. If the concrete is cracked, you need to dig them out to at least 5mm and caulk cracks and holes with hydraulic cement or **Impa Epoxy Scrapercoat** (follow product instructions carefully).
- An acid wash will remove all the remaining material and kill off any biological contaminants. Use 50% water and 50% **Restore Brick Cleaner** or a solution recommended by your pool shop. Scrub the walls and floor thoroughly. Make sure you wear protective clothing and a suitable mask. Rinse the entire pool area.

- Now clean the entire pool with tri-sodium-phosphate or suitable alternative. This is a detergent that will neutralize the acid and remove the glaze from any remaining paint. Rinse again with fresh water and allow to dry for 3-5 days. You can check if the concrete is dry by taping the edges of a square of transparent plastic to the base of the pool. If there is no condensation after 24 hours, you're good to go.
- Before painting, double check your surface and remove any remaining loose material. Follow the instruction of the chosen pool paint very carefully and also use the correct primer suggested for the product. The paint will need to be very well mixed – allow 5 minutes or more using a power mixer. Apply the paint with a short pile, solvent-resistant roller starting at the deep end and work your way to the shallow end. Having to phone a friend for rescue from the deep end is embarrassing! Apply a second coat after 16 -24 hours. Avoid excessive rolling to prevent trapping bubbles in the paint.
- Ideally, you want the paint the pool on a clear, fine day that is not too hot, too cold or too humid. Wait at least 4 days after completing for the paint to cure before filling the pool. If it rains during this time, you need to remove any standing water and add extra time for the paint to cure. After the paint has cured, fill the pool, restart the filter and add chemicals as required.

IMPORTANT:

Make sure that you check with your pool shop or a **Impa Paint Stockist** or **Impa Technical Services** for the best options. The above chemicals are only an indication of what can be used and are not necessarily going to be available in your area or what is best for your pool. Safety equipment is very important for this job, you're working with solvents, acid and potentially dangerous old paint. Don't take it lightly!