

# THINGS TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A SWIM SPA

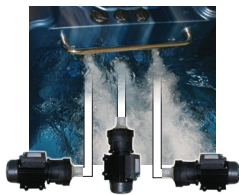


**For a swim spa to perform well it must have at least 3 pumps, each jet must be powered by it's own pump and have quality jets that hit your body. Swim spas with 2 pumps or more than 4 swim jets will not perform well.**

## **Min. 3 Pumps & 1 Pump Per Swim Jet**

### **To Create the Necessary Flow**

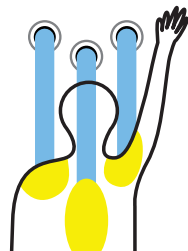
You need at least 3 pumps powering the swim jets to provide enough water flow to swim against. Be careful, as many inferior swim spas have 2 swim jets running off each pump – using aeration and “restrictors” in the jet openings to create the appearance of flow but offering a poor swimming experience. Look for 3 or 4 pumps and no jet restrictors.



## **Correctly Positioned Jets**

### **To Create Resistance Against Your Body**

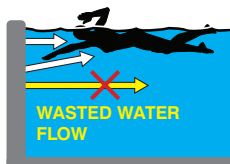
Swim jets that are positioned too low or too far apart don't create the required resistance against your body. If there are more than 4 swim jets some of the water flow will be wasted.



## **Quality Swim Jets that Don't Move Easily**

### **More Flow Where you Want it**

Check that the swim jet nozzles have an unrestricted 50mm opening and don't move easily by hand - otherwise water will move the nozzles and you won't be able to direct flow where you need it.



## **Swim Poles & Handrails are Worth Considering**

### **For more swimming, fun and exercise options**

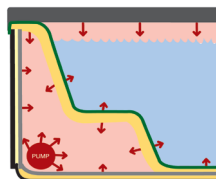
A swim pole is a great swimming alternative that's perfect for aerobic training and swimmers that find it hard to keep “in the zone”. It gives you lift and lets you swim at your own pace. Handrails are useful as they offer you more exercise options.



## **As Much Insulation as Possible**

### **For lower running costs and quiet operation**

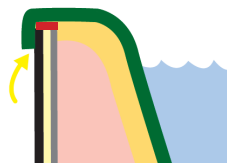
The more layers of insulation on the base and sides of a swim spa and the thicker the insulation on the spa shell the better. A good insulation system will save you thousands of dollars over the life of your swim spa. Insist on seeing the insulation system yourself.



## **Small Gap Between Shell & Cabinet**

### **Keeps the hot air in and the cold air out**

Gaps between the shell and cabinet allow cold air in, significantly increasing running costs. Feel under the lip of the shell to make sure the gap is small and check if the gap is totally sealed like better manufacturers do.



# Heat Pump and Gas Heater Ready

To reduce running costs by up to 75%

Heat pumps are without doubt the most efficient way to permanently heat a swim spa. While they don't work quite as well in cold weather, even at 3°C they produce over \$3.50 of heat compared to every \$1 spent on an electric heater. So you can swap to a cheaper form of heating at any time, choose a control system that is fully heat pump compatible (and gas heater ready) and make sure the pump, connections and plumbing are in place.



## “Smart” Control System

To reduce running costs & maintain heat

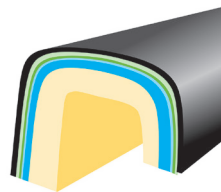
Look for a spa with a Spa Net control system as they can heat and filter using off peak power (save up to 50%) and feature “intuitive technology” that “learns” how to minimise your running costs.



## The Thickest Possible Shell

For strength and long life

While shopping around, use your fingers to gauge the thickness of the shell by feeling underneath the spa lip (where the shell meets the cabinet). The thicker it is, the stronger your spa will be. A thick shell also says something about the manufacturer, who is obviously not building the spa based on price alone.



## Strong Galvanized Frame

To support the shell for long life

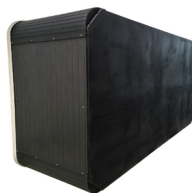
A good swim spa weights 6-12 tonnes which requires a strong, well made frame that supports the sides, base and seats of the spa. Insist on seeing the frame and make sure the steel is galvanized (at least 25mm x 50mm) and the welds look good.



## Wrap-Around Sealed ABS Base

Protects the frame, stops rain and pests

It is important that the frame is protected from the weather and pests and water cannot enter your spa. The only way to do this is with a sealed base that wraps around the frame.



## Large 4 Cartridge Filter System

Cleaner water and less chemicals

The bigger the filter system the better the water quality and the less chemicals you have to use. Look for a 4 cartridge, 200 sq. ft. filter system.



## Quality Spa Jets

For less maintenance & longer life

Jets with no bearings, a screw out mechanism and HARD black PVC on the back are the most reliable and long lasting.



# OTHER INTERESTING FACTS

## Pump Sizes

Be aware that some manufacturers mislead their customers into thinking that they are getting a larger pump on their swim spa. The truth is that a 4.8 BHP (brake horse power) pump is exactly the same as a 3 HP pump.

## Energy efficiency “Star Ratings”

No government body has ever allocated efficiency ratings to individual swim spa brands so where star ratings are being used, they're simply being “made up” by manufacturers who probably have very basic insulation systems.

## Running Costs

Some manufacturers promote misleading running costs that do not include heating costs. Other manufacturers base their claims on incorrect power rates and unrealistic assumptions. And a few brands promote “low amp” filter pumps but as they run 24 hours a day they actually cost you more. If claims are made, ask how they are calculated. The only thing that effects running costs is the amount of insulation, the size of the heater (the quicker the spa heats the sooner the pump turns off) or if a heat pump is used (which offers savings of up to 75%).

## “Salt Water” Spas

Salt can only be used to sanitise water when it is transformed (by a salt chlorinator) into chlorine. But as this form of chlorine does not suit hot water you'll have to add liquid bromine - which is another form of chlorine! On top of this, chlorine is very corrosive and will damage your heater element so be wary of “chlorine-free” saltwater spas.

## Backlit Jets

While they look good in the showroom, in most cases you won't see these lights when you are in the spa as people will be sitting against them. Also, these clear plastic jets break more easily and if water quality is not maintained they can become opaque (slightly white). As the LED lights can also be hard to replace when they fail we would suggest other forms of in-spa lighting.

## UV “Sterilisers”

This form of water treatment is not generally successful for spas as the systems being used are WAY too small. To work they need to run 24 hours a day (which is very expensive). The bulbs need replacing every year or sooner (not cheap) and when they break there is a risk that electricity passes into the water. If the small, cheap units being used actually worked then every spa company would use them - not just a handful who are using them as a gimmick to sell spas. Unless you are willing to fit a very large, expensive U.V. system, don't expect any real benefits.

## Built in TV's

If you talk to any spa repair technician they'll tell you that the average in-spa TV is lucky to last a year as moisture, metal and electronics don't mix and the mechanisms that raise and lower the TV are prone to problems. The cost to repair them is very high and they also take up valuable room inside your spa. If you want to watch TV in your spa, a better option is a wall mounted, big screen TV near the spa that will cost you a fraction of the price and can be easily serviced.