



THE PROS AND CONS OF ADDING A POOL TO YOUR HOME

Does a pool add value to a home? No. And yes.

In general, building a pool is not the best way to add value to your home. You're better off making physical improvements to your actual house instead of adding a pool to your yard.

However, a pool can add value to your home in some cases:

- If you live in a higher-end neighborhood and most of your neighbors have pools. In fact, not having a pool might make your home harder to sell.
- If you live in a warm climate, such as Florida or Hawaii.
- Your lot is big enough to accommodate a pool and still have some yard left over for play or gardening.

Still, that's no guarantee you'll get a return on your investment. At most, your home's value might increase 7% if all circumstances are right when it comes time to sell. Those circumstances include the points made above, plus:

- The style of the pool. Does it fit the neighborhood?
- The condition of the pool. Is it well-maintained?
- Age of the pool. If you put a pool in today and sell in 20 years, you probably won't recoup your costs, especially if the pool needs updating.
- You can attract the right buyer. Couples with very young children may shy away from pools because of safety issues, but an older childless couple may fall in love with it.

But only you, the homeowner, can determine the true return on investment. A pool can add value to your quality of life and enhance the enjoyment of your home. You can't put a price tag on that. But, we can put a price tag on how much a pool costs to build and maintain.

VISIT MICHAELBELL.COM FOR MORE RESOURCES
Michael B. Bell | 626.796.4100 | michael.bell@sothebyshomes.com

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY



THE PROS AND CONS OF ADDING A POOL TO YOUR HOME

The Cost to Build a Pool

The average cost in the U.S. to install, equip, and fill a 600-sq.-ft. concrete pool starts at \$30,000.

Add in details like safety fences (most states require them), waterfalls, lighting, landscaping, and perhaps a spa, and you're easily looking at totals approaching \$100,000.

Costs also depend on the type of pool you choose. Gunitite is the most popular in-ground pool. Gunitite is a mixture of cement and sand, which can be poured into almost any shape. It has replaced concrete pools as the sought-after standard.

Fiberglass shells and those with vinyl liners fall on the lower end of the budget scale, but the liners typically need replacing every 10 or so years. Changing the liner requires draining the pool and replacing the edging (called coping), so over time, costs add up. Most homebuyers will insist that you replace a vinyl liner, even if it's only a few years old.

Filtration and Heating

The filtration pump is the biggest energy hog in a pool system, so you want to get the most efficient pump possible. The good news here is that new, variable-speed pumps use up to 80% less energy than old single-speed pumps, cutting operating expenses dramatically.

At about \$500, these cost more up front, but some local utilities offer rebates through participating pool dealers. You can further cut energy costs by setting the pump to run at non-peak times, when rates for electricity are lower.

If you're planning to heat your pool, gas heaters are the least expensive to purchase and install, but they typically have the highest operation and maintenance costs. Many pool owners opt instead for electric heat pumps, which extract heat from the

VISIT MICHAELBELL.COM FOR MORE RESOURCES
Michael B. Bell | 626.796.4100 | michael.bell@sothebyshomes.com

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY



THE PROS AND CONS OF ADDING A POOL TO YOUR HOME

surrounding air and transfer it to the water. Heat pumps take longer than gas to warm the pool, but they're more energy-efficient, costing \$200 to \$400 less to operate per swimming season.

Regardless of heating system, covering the pool with a solar blanket to trap heat and reduce evaporation will further lower operating costs.

Maintenance Expenses

All pools require that the water be balanced for proper pH, alkalinity, and calcium levels. They also need sanitizing to control bacteria and germs, which is where chlorine has traditionally entered the picture.

These days you have a variety of options, including systems that use bromine, salt, ozone, ionizers, or other chemical compounds that can be less irritating to skin. Chlorine remains the most popular because the upfront costs are reasonable, and you don't have to be as rigid about checking the levels on a set schedule. But as far as your wallet is concerned, they all even out in the end.

In a seasonal swimming climate, budget about \$600 annually for maintenance if you shoulder the chemical balancing and cleaning yourself; in a year-round climate, it's more like \$15 to \$25 per week.

To save yourself the task of once-a-week vacuuming, you can buy a robotic cleaning system for between \$500 and \$800 that will do the job for you. In locations where the pool must be opened and closed for the season, add another \$500 each time for a pro to handle this task.

Insurance and Taxes

A basic homeowners insurance policy typically covers a pool structure without requiring a separate rider, but you should increase your liability from the standard

VISIT MICHAELBELL.COM FOR MORE RESOURCES
Michael B. Bell | 626.796.4100 | michael.bell@sothebyshomes.com

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

FROM THE RESOURCE LIBRARY OF:



THE PROS AND CONS OF ADDING A POOL TO YOUR HOME

amount.

It costs about \$30 a year to bump coverage from \$100,000 to \$500,000. Many underwriters require you to fence in the pool so children can't wander in unsupervised.

In some areas, adding a pool may increase your annual property taxes, but it won't necessarily add to your home's selling price. For that reason, try to keep your total building cost between 10% and 15% of what you paid for your house, lest you invest too much in an amenity that won't pay you back.

VISIT [MICHAELBELL.COM](https://www.michaelbell.com) FOR MORE RESOURCES
Michael B. Bell | 626.796.4100 | michael.bell@sothebyshomes.com

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Content Courtesy: Julie Sturgeon, Realtor.com