



# TOP POOL TRENDS

WE FINANCE THOUSANDS OF POOL LOANS EACH YEAR, SO WE GET TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT ARE THE LATEST TRENDS GOING ON. GET INSPIRATION AND IDEAS ON WHAT YOU COULD DO TO YOUR BACKYARD.







## SMALL POOLS

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It is a common misconception that to have a swimming pool, you must have a big yard. Pool owners are throwing that notion away because tiny pools are all the rage! If you have a small yard, a tiny pool could be a perfect and beautiful addition. If you have a large yard, you can have it all by surrounding that smaller pool with other great outdoor features like a seating area, fire pit or garden. You may have to get strategic about sizing and placement but what's a little more planning to get the backyard of your dreams?

The popularity of small pools is evident in the number of names they go by including but not limited to; tiny pools, plunge pools, cocktail pools, dipping pools, spools and there are probably more.





Pools do not need to be a show of opulence with 'bigger being better', instead homeowners are opting to put more focus on the overall experience of the backyard where a pool is the highlight but not the sole feature.

These smaller pools allow for more options in a backyard's set up and also give options to those who thought their space was too small for a traditional pool. There are many updated shapes to fit more confined spaces as well as custom options to get the perfect pool for your particular situation.

Lap pools are increasing in demand due to the slim design it allows them to fit into backyards where there is not a big square space. These are typically very sleek in design so compliment new builds especially, as well as having the practical aspect of being able to do exercise right in your own backyard.





People are also discovering the added bonus of smaller pools; cost. They are not only cheaper to buy due to less materials but require less earth moving, less labor and other installation costs. Plus due to the lower volume of water they are cheaper long term as there is less water to heat, less to clean and therefore much less stress on the filtration/pump systems.

There is a distinct shift towards the mindset that by decreasing the pool size (and therefore costs) there can be more spent on extra features like waterfalls, firepits, outdoor kitchens, built-in seating etc. This effectively gives better value as you get more features and more usability out of the space by only sacrificing the pool footprint.

If you want to take the tiny pool to the next level of functionality there is the option of a 'spool', these are a combination of a small plunge pool crossed with a spa. So during the day they are used to cool off in the cold water and at night or during the colder months you can heat the water and enjoy it as a typical spa with jets and lighting.













# LEDGES

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These come in many styles and go by many different names including Tanning Ledge, Baja Shelf, Splash Deck and Sun Shelf. Previously featured only in resorts and 5-star hotels, these are now entering into the residential market due to their practicality. Simply speaking it is a flat very shallow area in the pool.

The many benefits of adding a sun shelf to a pool:

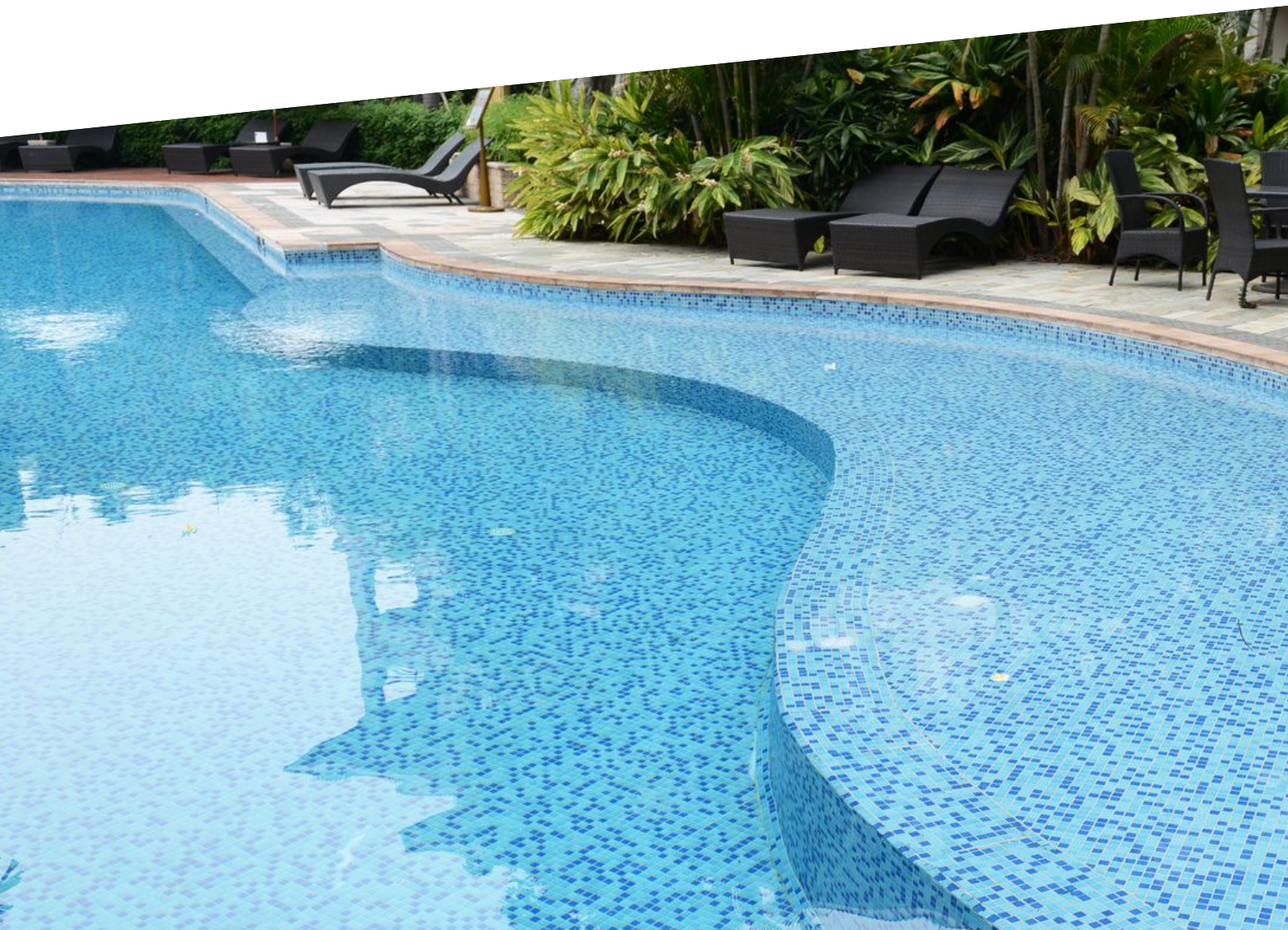
- It is somewhere small children can play in the water, commonly seen in the kids area at water theme parks. Likewise anyone with disabilities can also enjoy the water as well as people not confident in larger bodies of water.



- You can be half in/half out of the water to enjoy the warmth of the sun and the coolness of the water just like lying in the shallows at a beach.
- You can add furniture (deck chairs, loungers etc) to the pool to have your feet soaking while sitting back and relaxing.
- They are part of the interior of the pool so don't make your total pool footprint any larger.
- They can be as small or as big as you like so can be accommodated into almost any pool design.
- Being so shallow the sun heats that water much faster than the deeper areas of the pool helping warm it up faster.











## IN-WATER SEATING

Adding to the sun shelf experience, many homeowners are opting to put permanent seating in this area to ensure the style of the pool is maintained and to add to the visual appeal of the shelf. There are also options for adding tables, umbrellas and massage jets to this area of the pool for the ultimate set up.







## DEPTH

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Pools have always been impressive in any backyard but are they always as practical as they could be? Gone are the days of a diving board down one end of a rectangular pool. Traditionally pools have a deep end and a shallow end but that isn't always necessary nowadays when pools are for kids and families to play in.

Going against the norm of having a deep end, more people are choosing a shallow design to better suit their habits in the water. That means now being able to play games from within the pool like volleyball, badminton etc. which adds another dynamic to the pool and activities you can do in your backyard.







It also means it can be more comfortable for many swimmers when they can touch the bottom of the pool no matter where they are in it.

An added bonus is that less depth means less water which saves on the volume of water that needs to be heated and also chemically treated, reducing the ongoing costs and making cleaning easier.

**Tip:** We always recommend people think about how they plan to use the pool and if having a deep end is essential for what they want







# COLORS

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This is one of the biggest trend changes we have seen and is dramatically influencing what is classed as a 'modern design' in pools nowadays. There is a shift away from the bright, light blue coloring used inside the pool which is what has been the preferred look for decades. Now people are opting for darker tones, greys, deep dark blues and even blacks.





The second reason is that the dark colors help the water absorb and retain more heat, making the most of the natural pool heater...the sun. This makes the water more enticing to get into and saves on costs if your pool is heated.

Another bonus although not a major point is that in many cases the pool appears deeper than it actually is as your eyes have more trouble distinguishing the bottom and sides as opposed to a highly reflective light blue color.

We are also seeing this in newly designed commercial pools as architects want to keep up with the latest looks and also make use of the benefits from a darker tone as noted earlier.

**Tip:** Do note that darker toned pools can hide algae and general dirtiness which is great for keeping the appearance good but you need to be more attentive of those building up before you plan to go for a swim.







## MODERN DESIGN

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There is a shift to more modern designs for pools to better suit their surroundings and be a complementary piece to the backyard rather than the dominating feature. We used to often see very large pools that took up all the backyard space available and little area allocated to things adding to the ambience such as gardens and playspace.

These pools would often have all the bells and whistles such as slides, diving boards and funky shapes of the pool itself. Things are now moving to more subtle setups where the pool is more cohesive with the space it is in and not have it overtake the yard but rather feel like an extended part of the architecture of the home





This follows the small pool trend - rather than building an enormous pool with every feature imaginable, a more relaxing space is being achieved as more thought is going into the total backyard experience and how homeowners use it in a day to day manner.

Introducing natural elements to transform your pool area into a sanctuary is one of the trends at the moment. Having a big body of water is not the only way to create a relaxing and appealing outdoor space, how the pool works with its surroundings is important and many are adding vegetation into their backyards to compliment the pool and create a more relaxing and natural feel.

This train of thought is even more important when you have an oddly shaped outdoor space, many homes do not have a big, flat, square canvas to work with so how the elements are added to the space and how they work together has brought this trend about. Owners can achieve the same effects of a large pool and backyard by maximizing the space they do have and making the most of the latest shapres and designs.













# FIRE PITS

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Fire and water together, when done right can make a stunning experience in a backyard.

After a day by the pool and the sun goes down the addition of a fire feature can extend the amount of use you get out of your backyard as the nighttime changes the scene to one of light and warmth.

Everyone enjoys sitting next to a fire at night where there is nothing to do but look at the flames and chat, the fire creates a center focal point which everyone gathers around. This coupled with the dramatic backdrop of a pool (and perhaps lighting and a water feature) makes for an ambience that draws people together and heightens relaxation.













## SUNKEN SEATING

Increasing in popularity and taking the above ideas to the next level is to get water and fire as close as possible with a sunken seating area with a built-in firepit. These setups of course need to be done where space is ample.







# LED LIGHTING

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LEDs are not new anymore but how they are used is still being expanded and pools and backyard settings are ideal for them.

Incandescent lighting is the traditional type you would see in pools but this is now considered outdated. They are no longer the popular choice as they require regular changing as they burn out, they also emit yellow light which when combined with the blue of the pool gives the water a green appearance. Halogen lights are also a common option but these have the negative of being costly to buy and still give the green look in a pool. Both of these options produce a lot of heat which wastes a lot of power when you are just wanting to only affect the pool's appearance.





LEDs are perfectly suited to pools as they have a long life cycle so need to be changed very rarely which is great when those lights are in the pool itself. They are also low wattage meaning they consume little power so you can have them on regularly as opposed to special occasions when you are entertaining.







LEDs allow you to also color the pool with any color you like thanks to the use of the red, blue and green system making a huge range of options for how you want the pool to appear all from the same set up.

This can all be controlled by your phone to change the appearance to suit the occasion or your mood.

If you are going to incorporate LED lighting into your pools design talk to your pool builder for the best plan to suit your situation, here are a few things to consider:

- Shape of the pool; bright and dark areas.
- The color of the pool (as mentioned, darker colors are becoming popular).
- What areas to highlight e.g stairs, waterfall, walls etc.
- Whether you want white light or multi-color options.
- Lighting of the areas surrounding the pool.



# THE WRAP UP

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We are seeing homeowners looking to modernize their pools with clean lines, fresh colors, and functional additions. They are opting for pools that fit their home, lifestyle, and aesthetic while still being the exciting addition that they should be. Less is more in terms of boldness but not in fun and functionality.

At the end of the day, your pool is a big investment, and the design should be something you love. Trends come and go, but your pool should make you happy for decades to come. Have fun with it, and happy designing!

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