



Better Plants. Better Advice. Better Results.

Care, Maintenance & Winterizing - Fountains, Pottery, Statuary & Bird Baths

Fountain Care & Maintenance

Always operate your fountain with the pump fully submersed in water. Do not let pump run dry. Low water levels in your fountain may cause pump burnout. You will need to add water daily due to the design, wind, evaporation and splash. Fountain should be turned off anytime you plan on being gone for several hours.

Keep fountain clean. Remove leaves and debris that may enter the fountain. Do not use a chlorine based product to control the growth of algae; they can damage the fountain's finish. Use a less harsh water clarifier and algaecide that can be purchased from your local garden center or swimming pool supply store. Products that contain natural enzymes which safely break down organic contaminants can also be used. Natural enzymes are not a chemical and may take longer to work but are safe for pets and wildlife. Follow the directions printed on the bottle.

Before adding any product to your fountain, always start with fresh clean water.

Aquatic plants and fish are not recommended in your fountain. Plant roots will clog the pump and most ornamental fountains are not deep enough to support fish. In both cases there will be extra cleaning.

Winterize before first frost

1. If your fountain has a copper fountain ring, disconnect it and store indoors. There is water in the copper ring so be careful not to get wet when you remove. Copper rings are highly sensitive to winter weather and the elements. The spray heads are very fragile. Always handle a copper fountain ring with extreme care.
2. If you have the fountain lighting system installed in your fountain, carefully remove the string of LED lights and the transformer and store indoors for the winter. The jumper wires that are run inside the fountain can be left in the fountain.
3. Before covering your fountain for the winter is the perfect time to clean it:
 - Remove ALL water from the fountain shells and any parts of the fountain that will hold water.
 - If fountain has drain plugs, remove them to drain the water. Place drain plugs in a plastic bag & leave in the fountain. Prior to starting the fountain in the spring, you'll reinsert the drain plugs.
 - Remove leaves and other debris by hand and use a Wet-Vac or Shop-Vac to remove the water.
 - Most times all you need to do is squirt the muck that accumulates in the shells of the fountain with your garden hose.
 - Never use harsh cleaners or stiff brushes; they will harm the finish
 - While the shells of the fountain are still damp use a mild soap and a sponge to clean any dirt that may have built up through the summer. Rinse with clean water and wipe up the remaining water with a sponge until all the water is removed.
 - Store the pump in the fountain.

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Cover fountain

1. Open the cover and place the cover over the fountain. Center the cover on the fountain
2. Carefully tighten the drawstring so that the cover opening is smaller than the bottom shell of the fountain. **DO NOT OVER TIGHTEN.** Grab the cover from the top and lift the cover up until the cover opening touches the bottom of the shell.
3. While holding the cover above the fountain with one hand, grab the cover with your other hand just above the top piece of the fountain. At this point, tie off the cover with a piece of rope which will custom fit the cover to your fountain.
4. Once fountain is covered DO NOT allow water to re-enter the fountain. DO NOT allow water, snow or ice to collect on top of the cover. Through the winter check your fountain to make sure the cover is secure and water or ice has not collected on the fountain cover.

Bird Baths

Stone, glass, mosaic, concrete, solar, and ceramic bird baths are susceptible to damage as freezing temperatures can cause these materials to expand and crack. Metal, resin, and plastic bird baths are typically impervious to freeze damage and most suitable for the winter use.

A bird bath heater can prevent water from freezing, eliminating the need to store or cover most birdbaths.

Leaving bird baths outdoors empty during winter can allow ice to form inside the top, which can damage the finish and possibly crack it when the ice expands. If it's not possible to store indoors – garage or shed, turn the top over so water will not collect: do not allow the pedestal to sit in a pool of ice or freeze to the ground.

In spring, empty the bird bath and thoroughly sterilize it with a weak bleach solution to start the season with a clean, healthy basin for birds to drink from. Repeat weekly until winter.

Pottery, Planters & Statuary

Ideally, all outdoor containers should be stored indoors for the winter even if made of materials that withstand the elements; extra protection will extend their life.

- Remove any plant material and soil
- Wash the inside with soap & water
- If left outdoors, flip empty pots over, drainage holes up and use bricks or pot feet to keep raised above the ground
- Pots that remain planted should be wrapped with layers of bubble wrap to insulate the pot and plant roots.
- Terra cotta is especially susceptible to cracking due to its porous nature and should be stored indoors. If they can't be moved indoors, raise them off the ground & cover with a tarp.
- Other porous materials included cast stone, concrete and ceramic.
- Materials that can withstand a freeze or wood, metal & plastic.

Most statuary is made of cast stone or concrete. If it can't be stored indoors, raise off the ground and cover with waterproof tarp.

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