

Comparing Fiberglass, Concrete, and Vinyl Liner Pools in the Modern Age



River Pools
CATCH THE WAVE

riverpoolsandspas.com

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This guide is arranged in a question and answer format. Here's what we're going to cover:

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- 7 Have the Surfaces of Inground Pools Become More Durable?
- 8 Have Inground Pools Become More Enjoyable to Swim In?
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Before we jump into the questions, let me share that **we at River Pools specialize in fiberglass pools**. We are passionate about our product because we've experienced first-hand just how happy our customers are with their investment. However, we love all types of inground pools so long as they are well designed and built.

Notwithstanding, there are dramatic differences between each type of pool. That, my friends, is what we are going to cover in the following question.

Let's jump right in!

What Are the Three Types of Inground Pools and What Is Their Genesis?

World War II and the Rise of the Backyard Swimming Pool

Swimming pools date back **over 5000 years to multiple ancient civilizations**. But they were not a realistic option for the average family until after **the end of World War II**. The American industry was booming as the growing population spread into the suburbs. The average family was becoming more affluent, they had time for recreation, and they had room in their backyard for outdoor activities. Inground pools quickly became in high demand, which led to innovative ways to provide families with their own backyard oasis.

The Beginning of the Modern Concrete Pool



Concrete pools have been around for hundreds of years, but there was one innovation that revolutionized the way concrete could be used: **a process called gunite**.

Most people don't know that gunite is not a material, but a process. In short, it is pneumatically placed concrete, or concrete that is **shot through a gun nozzle and blown into place**. The gunite process was **invented in Allentown, PA, by a man named Carl E. Akley in 1910** and was adopted as a method to repair existing buildings, dams, bridges, and other structures.

The gunite process was used to build inground pools as early as 1940, but it wasn't until the post-war boom that it became the era's most popular way to build pools. Since then, the terms "gunite pool" and "concrete pool" have become essentially interchangeable. The basic construction was simple: **excavate** the hole, construct a cage made of steel bars called **rebar**, and shoot the **concrete shell** around the steel. Back then it was common to **paint** the interior of the pool, but builders also used **plaster finishes**.

There have been some minor changes in the construction of the concrete pool over the years, but for the most part they are built the same today as in the post-war era.

Vinyl Liner Inground Pools Enter the Marketplace

Around the mid 1950s, the first vinyl liner pools appeared in order to meet the growing demand of middle-class America. The basic construction consisted of a **perimeter wall**, initially made of concrete or masonry block, and a **material to cover the earthen floor**, typically either sand or concrete. The **liner** was dropped into the vessel and filled with water.

Not long thereafter, treated lumber became readily available, and became the preferred wall panel material. But increased demand in early 1960s led innovators and thought leaders in the industry to search for a material that would make their wall panels lighter and stronger. It was **steel**, and it changed the vinyl pool segment of the market forever. The **metal wall panel** was born and it led to the boom of vinyl liner pools that took place during the '70s and '80s.

As the popularity of liner pools grew, **polymer wall panels** entered the scene, affording more design flexibility, corrosion resistance, and lighter construction. The vast majority of vinyl liner pools today are constructed using metal or polymer wall panels.

➤ The Genesis of Fiberglass Pools in America



Fiberglass technology was originally developed during the **1930s** and was first used to produce military aircraft parts during World War II. It was **strong, light, and durable**, which led to its inevitable expansion into consumer products such as racecar bodies and boats during the post-war boom.

In **1957** a man named Bob Stark, a self-taught man and innovator, applied this newfound technology to the **swimming pool** industry. The first fiberglass pools were born. Over the following decades fiberglass pools grew in popularity as advancements in technology increased the product's strength and durability.

The **1990s** saw an explosion of new pool designs as major players in the fiberglass pool industry went toe-to-toe competing for dealers and growing market share. By the **mid-2000s**, with advancements such as colored pool finishes, ceramic tile, and poolside spas and tanning ledges becoming the norm, the **general public's perception of fiberglass pools shifted** from that of a "bathtub pool" to an elegant alternative for high-end backyards.

This is evident by the fact that between 2005 and 2015, fiberglass pools exploded from **6% to 17% of inground pool market share in America**, nearly tripling in size in only a 10-year period. It was, and continues to be, the fastest growing segment of the nation's swimming pool industry.

“

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Have the surfaces of inground pools become more durable?

Concrete Pools

The traditional concrete pool has a **plaster interior finish**. The basic make-up of plaster hasn't changed in eons, but it is a proven pool finish. If maintained properly, it should last an average of **15 years**. Plaster does have some disadvantages. For example, it is **expensive to re-finish** and it is very **porous**, leading to increased **algae growth** and **more work** for the pool owner. An alternative concrete pool finish, **pebble tec**, is much more expensive, but longer lasting. Pebble tec is basically a plaster finish with the top layer of cream removed, revealing the tiny colored pebbles in the plaster mix.

Vinyl Liner Pools

Because of increased government regulations on the manufacturing of vinyl sheeting, the **durability** of vinyl pool liners has actually **decreased** since the 1980s. I grew up building vinyl liner pools, and back then it wouldn't be uncommon to see a liner last 20–25 years. Now the average life expectancy of a vinyl liner is about **5–9 years**.

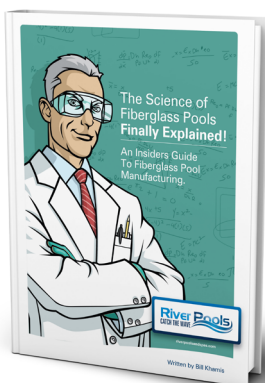
Fiberglass Pools

The surface of fiberglass pools, known as the **gelcoat**, has always outlasted other pool surfaces assuming the pool is properly manufactured and maintained. In fact, many of the original fiberglass pools installed in the '70s still have their original finish.

Scientific advancements in gelcoats have made the surface even more **durable**, such as the introduction of **vinyl ester resin** into the manufacturing process, which virtually **eliminated blistering** on the surface of fiberglass pools. The use of vinyl ester resin became widespread in the 1980s and 1990s.

The early 2000s saw a major fiberglass pool breakthrough with the introduction of **advanced colored gelcoat finishes** that far outperformed and outlasted standard white marine gelcoat and transformed the look of fiberglass pools forever.

We, at River Pools, entered the industry in 2001. Since that time, we have installed over 1,000 fiberglass pools and have not seen a single instance where a properly built and maintained pool required refinishing. This is possible because of scientific advancements such as vinyl ester resin and modern-colored gelcoat finishes.



► Check back for the **“The Science of Fiberglass Pools Finally Explained!”** ebook to learn more about how we manufacture our fiberglass pools.

Related Articles:

- [5 Problems with Concrete Pools You May Not Have Considered](#)
- [What Causes Osmotic Blisters on Fiberglass Pools?](#)

Have Inground Pools Become More Enjoyable to Swim In?

Concrete Pools

Although plaster is very durable, **it isn't the most enjoyable surface** for your body to come in contact with. The pebble tec finishes mentioned earlier are even **rougher**. For this reason, it's not uncommon for kids who have concrete pools in their backyard to **wear water shoes** when they swim.

Based on my personal experience, when I have played hard in concrete public pools in the past, it has hurt my feet...but perhaps I'm just a wimp :)

Vinyl Liner Pools

The surface of vinyl liner pools are **non-abrasive**. In fact, growing up with one in my backyard as a kid, I found them to be very pleasant to use overall. The plastic steps, which are common to liner pools, are also **comfortable to sit and walk on**.

Fiberglass Pools



The gelcoat surface of fiberglass pools is smooth to the touch and makes for a great swimming experience. **This is kind of corny, but in my pool at home, I like to sink all the way down to the bottom and just glide across the floor of the pool. It's quiet down there and with six kids I'll take all the silence I can get! :)**

Based on my own experience and the feedback from our customers, fiberglass pools are a joy to swim in.

Greco Pool Design - One Piece Fiberglass Inground Pool

Related Articles:

- ▶ [10 Reasons Why Fiberglass Pools May Be a Better Fit than Concrete for You](#)
- ▶ [Fiberglass Pool Owners: Never Tell Your Friends with Concrete Pools about This](#)

Have Inground Pools Become Easier to Maintain?

Concrete Pools



Have you noticed that we talk a lot about pool finishes? That's mainly because the finish of the pool dictates **how it feels, how often it's resurfaced, and how easy it is to maintain**. A plaster finish, despite its many virtues, is not a pool owner's best friend. Because the surface is rough and porous, it gives algae, every pool owner's worst enemy, a place to embed and take root.

Consequently, **concrete pool owners need to brush their entire pool down weekly with a pool brush to remove any algae that may be taking**

root on the surface. If an "algae bloom" does occur, it's very time-consuming and expensive to remedy, and because the algae has found a home, it's **much more likely to reoccur**. And pebble tec finishes, because they are rougher than plaster, are even more more difficult to maintain than plaster.

Have you ever heard of **acid washing**? It's a mandatory procedure for concrete pools that's typically needed every 3–5 years. Basically, the pool is drained and the interior surface is **rinsed with diluted muriatic acid**. This kills all the algae that has embedded into the surface and also restores the plaster's original look by eroding a thin layer of weathered plaster from the surface. This service is not required for vinyl or fiberglass pools.

Also, the pH of concrete is naturally high, which **constantly increases the pH of the pool water**. Consequently, concrete pool owners have to **add acid to their pools on a regular basis** to keep their pH within normal range. This is especially important, considering that **high pH in pool water lessens the effectiveness of chlorine**, making algae more likely to pop up.

Does all this make concrete pools bad? Not at all, I'd be happy to own one. But by all accounts they are a lot more work.

“

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Vinyl Liner Pools

Vinyl liner pools have always been easier than concrete pools to maintain, primarily because the vinyl surface **is not nearly as rough** as the plaster surface of a concrete pool. If an algae bloom does occur in a vinyl pool, however, there are some **areas that can give algae a place to hide**, like the overlap areas where the liner is seamed together. Vinyl pools are also typically larger pools, and **more space means more work**. But for the most part, vinyl pools are very easy to maintain.

Fiberglass Pools

One of the strongest advantages of fiberglass pools is that they are **very easy to maintain** when compared to other types of pools. Across the board, fiberglass pool owners rave about how little work their pools require. However, they are not maintenance-free; they do require work. The **water chemistry must be maintained** or, just like with any other pool, bad stuff will happen to the pool and the pool equipment.

With that said, there is a reason why fiberglass pools require much less time and money to care for. Again it goes back to the pool surface. **The non-porous gelcoat surface does not give algae a place to call home**. Consequently, fiberglass pools are much more algae-resistant, resulting in less chemical use, less filtration, and less time maintaining the pool. That's right, no need to scrub the walls, and the pool shell is inert, so **it does not raise the pH of the water**. Because of this, you don't fight a constant pH battle like with a concrete pool.

“
... fiberglass pool owners
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their pools require.”

Related Articles:

- ▶ [Unbiased Pool Owner Speaks Out about Owning Both Concrete & Fiberglass Pools](#)
- ▶ [Fiberglass Pools vs. Vinyl Liner Pools vs. Concrete Pools: An Honest Comparison](#)
- ▶ [Fiberglass vs. Concrete vs. Vinyl Liner Blog Article Library](#)
- ▶ [Why Are Inground Fiberglass Pools So Low Maintenance?](#)
- ▶ [Don't Believe Concrete Pools Are a Maintenance Nightmare? Watch This Video](#)

Have Inground Pools Become Less Expensive to Maintain?

Below is a chart comparing the cost to own each type of inground pool.

10 YEAR POOL COST PROJECTION			
ASSOCIATED COST OF OWNERSHIP	FIBERGLASS	VINYL LINER	CONCRETE
Acid Washing Pool Shell (every 3-5 years)	-	-	$2 \times \$450 = \900
Pool Cleaning Service (\$500/season)	-	-	$10 \times \$500 = \$5,000$
Replaster / Tile Pool Interior	-	-	\$10,000
Replace Liner (avg lifespan 5-9 years)	-	\$4,500	-
Chemical Usage	\$1,750 (\$175 x 10)	\$4,000 (\$400 x 10)	\$7,500 (\$750 x 10)
Electricity Usage	\$2,000 (\$200 x 10)	\$3,000 (\$300 x 10)	\$4,000 (\$400 x 10)
10 YEAR COST OF OWNERSHIP	\$3,750	\$11,500	\$27,400

As you can see, there is a substantial difference in the cost to own each type of pool. This is why we teach that the initial price of a pool isn't the only factor to consider when shopping for a pool. **The lifetime cost of ownership is equally important.**

Case in point: the lower initial price of a liner pool may be very appealing during the buying process, but coughing up an extra **\$4,500 every 5–9 years** has a huge ouch factor.



You'll also notice that, in addition to the cost of acid washing and replastering a concrete pool, a **pool cleaning service** is also listed as an expense. This is because the majority of concrete pool owners don't want the burden of maintaining the pool. This is not the case with fiberglass pool owners. I can only think of a handful of our 1,000 customers that have their pool serviced regularly.

Related Articles:

- ▶ [Inground Pool Cost of Ownership: Fiberglass vs. Concrete vs. Vinyl](#)
- ▶ [The Cost of Going with a Vinyl Liner Pool vs. Fiberglass Pools](#)
- ▶ [Will My Fiberglass Pool Require a Weekly Service Company?](#)

Have Inground Pools Become Easier to Install?

Concrete Pools

As mentioned earlier, the process for installing a concrete pool hasn't changed much, if at all, since the 1950s. **The average time frame to complete most concrete pool projects is 3–6 months, primarily because the process requires a ton of on-site labor.** Concrete pools are awesome, but they do not afford a speedy installation.

Vinyl Liner Pools

This process of installing a vinyl liner pools has changed very little over the past 30 years, and because it is **relatively simple** compared to that of a concrete pool, they take **much less time** to complete.

Vinyl liner pool builders **excavate**, set the perimeter **wall panels**, pour a **concrete footing** around the exterior of the wall panels, finish the earthen **floor** with concrete or a cement-based product, and install the **liner**. From there, the builders **vacuum-form the liner** to fit tightly and **fill** the pool with water. Then they pour the patio. In most cases, the entire process takes **4–8 weeks** to complete.

Fiberglass Pools

Has the process of installing a fiberglass pool evolved over the years? Absolutely, and I'm excited to share that with you. But first, let's get an understanding of the basic process. The installer **digs** a hole roughly 12"–18" larger than the pool shell, places a **bedding** material in the bottom of the hole for the pool to rest on, **sets** the one-piece pool shell in the hole with a piece of equipment, and **backfills** around the outside of the pool with either sand or gravel as the pool fills with water. Once the pool is full of water and backfilled completely, it's time for patio work. An average fiberglass pool project only takes **3–6 weeks** to complete.

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A Brief History of Fiberglass Pool Installations

The first fiberglass shells were not as precisely built as the modern pools of today. In other words, they were **not very level**, which made installations a challenge. As a result, the industry adopted a method called “**lift and wash**,” which is where the pool shell is lifted on all four corners with jacks until the top of the pool becomes level, then sand is washed beneath the shell with water to fill the void. This was the industry-accepted method for decades.

Because this method provided the best way to level a fiberglass pool at the time, sand naturally became

the material that installers used as the base under the pool as well as for backfilling around the outside of the pool. (Using dirt is a no-no.)

Over time, fiberglass pool manufacturers became better at constructing molds that were level and it became possible to simply **set the shell in the hole** and **get it level without the need to lift and wash**. But because sand was the only material that had ever been used, installers continued using it. Over the following decades, fiberglass pools grew in popularity, reaching across the entire country, and virtually every dealer continued installing pools with sand.

River Pools entered the market in 2001 as a construction company and by 2006 had installed hundreds of pools, all on sand, just as we were trained by the manufacturer we carried at the time. However, we started having problems, mainly stemming from the way the sand was behaving around the outside of the pool.

Around that time we visited Trilogy Pools and participated in a dealer conference where they touted the benefits of **using gravel as a backfill material**. It made complete sense to us, so we adopted gravel as our backfill material and our problems disappeared overnight. At the time, virtually all installers across the country were still using sand. We felt so strongly that this could change the industry that we started teaching about this on our website to grow the public's awareness of gravel. It was an uphill battle at first, but since that time the tide has turned. The majority of fiberglass pool installers across the country now use gravel as their preferred material of choice. And just to be clear, we don't teach that sand is necessarily bad, it's simply that, based on our experience, **the use of sand involves a degree of risk that is eliminated by the use of gravel**. Also, sand backfill is actually the preferred material when installing a fiberglass pool in pure sand soil. There are numerous links below this section where you can learn more about the advantages of using gravel over sand.

The shift from sand to gravel was of the major evolutions that have occurred with the installation of fiberglass pools over the years. Here are some others:

► The Shift from Flex Pipe to Rigid PVC Pipe

When it comes to installing long runs of pool plumbing installers basically have two options: flexible tubing (called flex pipe by pool guys) or rigid PVC pipe. The use of **flex pipe** was widespread in the past, despite the fact that even the manufacturers and distributors of the product state that it is **not suitable for underground use**. However it is easier to use, so many pool guys went with it, and some still do. The alternative is **rigid PVC pipe**, which is a little harder to work with, but is time tested and proven.

📖 Check out the following blog article and decide for yourself which you prefer in your backyard. Pay special attention to the comments from folks around the country who have had issues with flex pipe:

► [Swimming Pool Plumbing: Rigid PVC vs. Flexible PVC, Which is Best?](#)

► The Shift to Using the Proper Return Fittings

Swimming pool water flows back into the pool through a **jet-like fitting called a return**. When fiberglass pools began, the only fitting on the market that would work was a return fitting developed for above-ground pools, which was not suitable for use around the outside of an inground fiberglass pool. The problem is that with very little pressure from outside the pool, the fitting would **crack, causing a leak**, which is the worst thing you can have around any pool. New fittings were not developed until the early- to mid-2000s and now are used by many, but not all, fiberglass pool installers.

The Shift to Cantilevered Coping

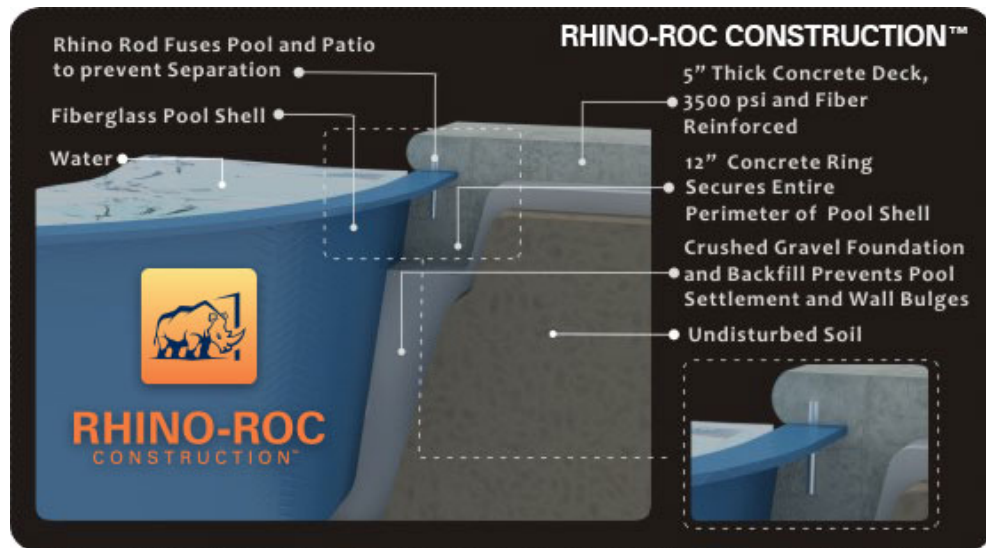
Decades ago, virtually all fiberglass pools were installed with the **top** of the fiberglass pool **exposed**. Concrete was poured flush with the top of the pool shell, and often the contractors did not ensure there was enough concrete under the lip to properly secure the pool shell. This was neither the most attractive or most stable installation.



RHINO-ROC
CONSTRUCTION™

By the late 1990s, **cantilevered concrete**, which is where concrete is poured on top of the pool shell forming a bullnose coping, was becoming standard. This helped better secure the pool shell, but still, many installers did not pour enough concrete under the lip of the pool or provide any means for the pool shell and patio to fuse together.

Our solution was to develop a methodology called Rhino-Roc Installation, which uses a fiberglass reinforcing rod, our “Rhino Rod.” It installs into the pool shell and is encased in concrete. This joins the pool shell and patio together to prevent shifting.



The Shift to Installing a Sump Pipe or System

At some point every fiberglass pool will need to be drained. It may be 40 years from now, but it will happen. In order to safely drain the pool, **you must be able to inspect the amount of groundwater** around the outside of the pool and **remove any that is present**. There is a very easy and inexpensive way to do this. The installer can insert an **8" PVC pipe** just outside of the deep end of the pool after the pool is set in the hole. It extends down just below the bottom of the pool and gravel is placed around it as the rest of the pool is backfilled. The top of the 8" pipe, which is within the patio area, is covered with a skimmer lid for cosmetics. At any point one can simply **look down the pipe** and if necessary drop a submersible pump inside and **pump out any ground water** around the outside of the pool. This costs \$50 and takes literally 5 minutes. Most important, it can save a lot of headache and heartache down the road. More installers around the country are doing this, but many are yet to jump on board.



We've taken this collection of best practices and coined it "Rhino-Roc Installation." **In order for a dealer of our pools to become a "River Certified Dealer," they must observe and keep all of these best practices. This will ensure that you have a pool that is installed using the most tried and tested methods available to us today.** If you are having a fiberglass pool installed by a dealer that is not "River Certified," be sure to ask them about all of these best practices.



Oasis Pool Design - One Piece Fiberglass Pool

Related Articles:

- ▶ [Rhino-Roc Construction](#)
- ▶ [7 Deadly Sins of Fiberglass Pool Installations!](#)
- ▶ [Awesome Fiberglass Pool Installation Video!](#)
- ▶ [Installing a Fiberglass Pool Properly: Sand vs. Gravel, Which Is Better?](#)
- ▶ [How Much and What Type of Gravel Is Needed with a Fiberglass Pool Installation](#)
- ▶ [How NOT to Backfill and Install a Fiberglass Swimming Pool](#)
- ▶ [7 Qualities of the Best Fiberglass Pool Builders in America](#)
- ▶ [Swimming Pool Plumbing: Rigid PVC vs. Flexible PVC, Which Is Best?](#)
- ▶ [5 Keys to Perfect Fiberglass Pool Plumbing](#)
- ▶ [Attention Fiberglass Pool Shoppers: 26 Things You Must Know before Your Pool Is Installed](#)

Have Inground Pools Become More Affordable?

The price of inground pools has remained relatively in-step with the rate of inflation in America. The average inground pool in America in 2014 was just under \$40,000. The **region of the country** in which you live can make a tremendous difference in the price of a new pool. For this reason there is a huge delta between the low and high range of pool cost.

Concrete Pools

In most parts of the country, the average concrete pool ranges **between \$40,000 and \$90,000**.

Vinyl Liner Pools

Vinyl liner pools are typically **between \$30,000 and \$55,000** in most parts of the country.

Fiberglass Pools



In Virginia and Maryland where we install pools, our average customer spends **between \$40,000 and \$80,000**. This is relatively typical for many parts of the country, although there are certainly areas with much lower and higher prices.

We have covered pricing and cost in great detail on our website. Be sure to check out our extensive pool cost and pricing library:

- ▶ [Inground Pool Cost Guide](#)
- ▶ [Fiberglass Swimming Pool Pricing and Cost Guide by River Pools](#)
- ▶ [10 Things You Must Know before Signing a Fiberglass Pool Contract](#)

▶ **Be sure you stay tuned for the release of River Pools new ebook: "10 Inground Pool Financial Questions Finally Answered!"**

Have Inground Pools Become More Design Flexible?

► Concrete Pools

As I alluded to earlier, the size and shape of concrete pools are 100% customizable. If you need an extremely wide or deep pool, or a pool that is an unconventional shape, a concrete pool will meet your needs. **Concrete pools also allow for really cool features such as beach entries and swim up bars, which can be done on other pools but require a lot of effort.**

► Vinyl Liner Pools

Vinyl liner pools are also customizable. However, a custom design is more **costly**, which offsets the low initial price of vinyl liner pools.

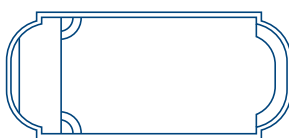
► Fiberglass Pools

The fundamental disadvantage of fiberglass pools is that there are **limited sizes and shapes** to choose from. This is because fiberglass pools are built on a mold, which cannot be modified. It's for this reason that we state that fiberglass pools are not the right alternative for everyone. **However, many people do find a design that they love from our wide range of models, and considering the low maintenance, durability, and aesthetic benefits of the product, it almost always makes sense for them to go with fiberglass.**

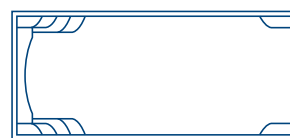
► Please make sure to check out River Pools' full line of pools today:



Crescent Cove 40



Roman Lounger 36



Greco 36



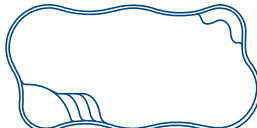
Crescent Cove 36



Resonance 32



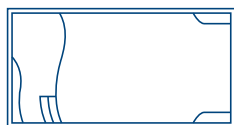
Del Sol 32 With Tanning Ledge



Oasis 30



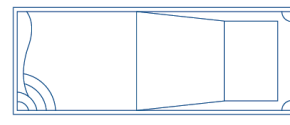
Resonance 28



Del Sol 28 With Tanning Ledge



Oasis 27



FunTime 40

Has the Quality Control of Inground Pools Improved?

► Concrete Pools

The nature of concrete pools is such that the pool is **completely built from scratch right on the job site**. A bundle of steel is delivered, a concrete truck backs into the driveway, and it all is transformed into a swimming pool, which is very cool!

But because all of these processes occur outside where it's impossible to control the conditions, concrete pool builders are left **at the mercy of the weather**. Factors such as temperature and moisture play a role in the end result.

► Vinyl Liner Pools

Because vinyl pools **arrive as a kit and are assembled on site**, the weather plays less of a role than with concrete pools. The production of vinyl pool liners has also improved over the years as there are **fewer factory defects** than before. There's nothing worse than installing a new liner only to find it's defective, so these improvements have been a good thing.

► Fiberglass Pools

A huge advantage of fiberglass pools is that the pool shell is **manufactured under factory-controlled conditions**. This completely removes weather from the equation and gives you the comfort of knowing your pool shell is manufactured in ideal conditions.

At River Pools, our decades of fiberglass experience have allowed us to set a new standard in terms of quality control in the fiberglass pool industry. Our fiberglass pools are produced with dozens of quality checkpoints throughout the entire manufacturing process.



What Options and Features Are Trending in 2018?

The first thing to understand is that the vast majority of **pool accessories are not specific to any one type** of pool. For example, pool lights, heaters, salt systems, automatic covers, slides, and any other piece of equipment is available on any pool regardless of type.

Concrete Pools

Because concrete pools allow for more design flexibility, you do have the ability to **custom-build tanning ledges**, which are a hot item right now, within the pool shell.

Vinyl Liner Pools

One feature now trending in higher-end vinyl pools is **vinyl-covered steps**. The typical vinyl liner pool has large white plastic steps that protrude from the pool and are very conspicuous. Many customers now are opting to have the steps inside the pool and covered with the vinyl liner. Again, this is **costly** and offsets the low initial price, but it looks much more attractive.

Fiberglass Pools



Fiberglass pools today are tending toward larger pools packed with features such as **spas, tanning ledges, and custom water features**. Many designs integrate multiple bodies of water such as a separate spa or tanning ledge that spill into the pool. Custom features on fiberglass pools add **sound quality and elegance** to any design.

Glass tile is also trending right now. It's gorgeous and lasts a long time. It can be used as waterline tile on fiberglass pools.

Wet Deck Pool Design - One Piece Fiberglass Inground Pool

Related Articles:

- [Can Any Fiberglass Pool Have a Tanning Ledge and Custom Water Feature?](#)

Has the Resale Value of Inground Pools Changed Over Time?

If you're wondering about how much return you'll get on your initial pool investment, understand this: they are a family investment, not a financial one. By and large, you will not get back what you spend on an inground pool. On average, **you can expect to re-coup between one-third and half of your initial investment when the home sells**. But hey, that's a lot more of a return than we get on all of those expensive family vacations.

“
... they are a family
investment, not a
financial one.

➡ Concrete Pools

Concrete pools do **hold their value well** and are perceived as a definite improvement to a home.

➡ Vinyl Liner Pools

Vinyl pools, however, are sometimes seen as a negative by potential home buyers, especially if the liner in the pool is more than 4 years old. They understand **they will likely need to replace the liner within a couple years**.

➡ Fiberglass Pools

The public perception of fiberglass pools has made a dramatic shift over the past 15 years. By and large, they are seen as **a product that belongs in high-end backyards**. Therefore, from a resale standpoint, they are perceived just like a concrete pool.

Related Articles:

- ▶ [Fiberglass Pool Facts and Pool Comparisons](#)

Have Inground Pools Become More Structurally Advanced?

Concrete Pools

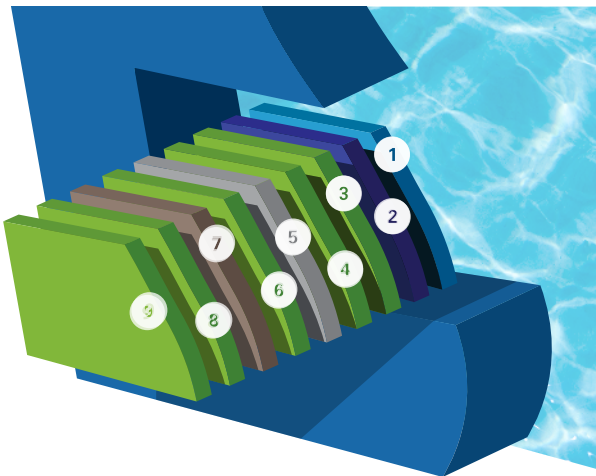
From a structural standpoint, neither the raw materials (concrete and steel) nor the processes used to construct concrete pools have changed much since the 1950s, when the gunite process became commonplace. **But for the most part, so long as a concrete pool is engineered and built well, it is there to stay.**

Vinyl Liner Pools

The same holds true for vinyl liner pools. Since the adoption of the metal and polymer wall panels, vinyl pools have not evolved much from a structural standpoint over the years and are built **basically the same way today as they were 20 or 30 years ago.**

Fiberglass Pools

This is not the case with fiberglass pools. Breakthroughs in science and technology have not only **improved the two basic raw materials** that compose of fiberglass pools (glass and resin) but have also brought forward additional products that, when added to a fiberglass pools laminate schedule, **dramatically increase the structural strength** of the pool.



For example, our fiberglass pools are composed of several layers. Each layer is far better than it was even a decade ago and adds tremendous strength to the overall pool structure. This technology simply wasn't available in years past.

What does all this mean? Simply that **because fiberglass pools are based in modern technology, they are allowed to evolve and improve.** Consequently, we have a product that looks great, feels great, lasts a long time, and is easy to maintain. This partially explains the double-digit growth of fiberglass pools in our nation we discussed earlier. And the most exciting part is that fiberglass pools just keep getting better.



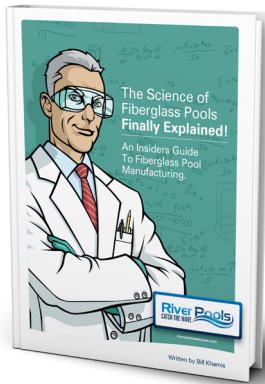
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Well, there you have it. A crash-course in pool history and a snapshot of the pool industry today. So, what do you think? Have some aspects of the pool industry advanced more than others in the past 60 years? Have some products evolved to stay relevant with our modern lifestyle? You be the judge. Only you can decide which type of pool best meets the need of your family.

But regardless of what pool you end up with in your backyard, we wish you the best of luck! And thank you again for spending your time with us here.

If you'd like to continue learning, please check out these other resources:



- ▶ **Check back for “The Science of Fiberglass Pools Finally Explained!” ebook to learn more about how we manufacture our fiberglass pools.**

Related Content:

- ▶ [Inground Pool Learning Center](#)
- ▶ [Swimming Pool Video Library](#)

And if you're interested, you can [request a quote for one of our fiberglass pools!](#)



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