How to Paint your Pool

Introduction

Painting is one of the best ways to protect and beautify your pool. In addition to adding a vibrant, fresh color, a new coat of paint can be a cost-efficient way to give new life to your concrete, plaster, or fiberglass surfaces.

Painting a pool is not as difficult as you may think; with proper planning and surface preparation, you're 99% of the way toward achieving a great result.

Key to success is working with a reputable manufacturer. At Ramuc Pool Paint, we've invested over 80 years in formulating our pool and deck coating systems; we have the knowledge and support available to guide you toward success.

In this document you'll find the basic steps to creating a professional, long lasting pool finish by applying a new coating system. Read through all the sections before beginning, and feel free to contact our customer support line with any questions.

What you'll need

Premium quality tools are important; not only will high quality rollers, brushes, and products create a better result, they'll make your job easier.

You'll need:

- 3/8 inch nap rollers
- Paint trays
- Roller extension poll, to reach deep end walls
- Paint scraper
- Sandpaper
- Paintbrushes
- Duct tape
- 2'x2' roll of clear plastic
- Masking tape
- Ramuc's Clean & Prep Solution
- Garden sprayer
- Sponges
- Leaf blower
- Broom
- Protective eyewear
- Rubber gloves, for handling chemicals
- 3200 psi (minimum) power washer

Step 1: Choose the proper paint

Paint choice begins by determining what type of paint is currently on your pool. If you are unsure, send us a dime-size sample chip for analysis. We'll be able to tell you what type of paint it is, and other information, such as thickness, number of coats present, and integrity of adhesion.

Three types of coatings are suitable for aquatic surfaces:

- **Acrylic Water-Base** can be applied over most types of coatings that are in sound condition, and can be used on damp surfaces. This is a cost-efficient approach and when done correctly, may last up to 2 seasons
- **Synthetic Rubber** can be applied over existing chlorinated or synthetic rubber systems, bare concrete, or plaster. When properly applied, the finish can last up to 3 years.
- **Epoxy** creates a tough, durable finish with unsurpassed stain, chemical and abrasion resistance. If your pool is currently painted with epoxy paint, you must continue to use epoxy. Epoxy can be an excellent alternative to re-plastering; two coats of a high build epoxy will achieve a hard, abrasion-resistant surface that costs 1/3 less than expensive resurfacing finishes. With proper preparation, your epoxy finish can last up to 8 years.

If you are not sure which paint best suits your specific needs, contact our customer support line, or refer to the Product Selector on our web site: http://www.ramucpoolpaint.com/beforeyoupaint/product-selector/

Factors such as pool size, shape, and surface condition will determine the quantity of paint your job requires. Refer to the Product Calculator on our web site at http://www.ramucpoolpaint.com/beforeyoupaint/product-calculator/pool-surface/ for recommendations. Be sure to have your pool measurements on hand.

Step 2: Inspect and prepare the surface

Ramuc's coating systems are formulated to adhere to a smooth, solid surface. Begin your job by inspecting your pool's surface and repairing minor damage.

To prepare the surface:

1. Drain your pool and allow it to dry.
2. Clear away any debris left on the bottom.
3. Visually inspect the entire empty pool area, looking for areas of peeling paint, cracks, chips, or surface defects.
4. Smooth any areas of peeling, flaking or chipped paint by scraping and sanding.
5. Repair any minor cracks or chips. Consult a professional regarding any major cracks or surface defects, as they may compromise the integrity of the pool.

Step 3: Clean the surface

Your pool surface must be completely clean and free of loose paint, dirt, oils or solutions before you apply your new coating system. We recommend using Ramuc's Clean & Prep Solution for this process, which replaces the traditional three-step pool cleaning process with one step.

To clean your surface:

1. Power wash the entire pool surface using a minimum 3200 psi power washer.
2. Once dry, sweep or use a blower to clear away any leftover paint chips or debris.
3. Use a garden sprayer to evenly apply Ramuc's Clean & Prep Solution to the entire surface, following the mixing instructions outlined on the label.
4. Scrub the solution, which will begin to foam and etch. Continue scrubbing until the foaming stops, paying extra attention to areas where heavy soil accumulates, such as the waterline and steps.
5. Flush the surface three times with a strong stream of clean water from a garden hose. **Do not flush using a power washer.** A power washer lacks the volume of water to effectively flush the surface. It is important that you remove all residual Clean and Prep Solution.

A clean, bare concrete or plaster surface that is ready for painting should have the texture of medium-grade sandpaper.

Step 4: Let the surface dry

The type of coating you will be using dictates how dry the surface must be before you begin. Acrylic paint can be applied to a damp surface, but epoxy must be applied to a completely dry surface. Check the instructions on your product label to determine dryness requirements.

Moisture may still be present even if a surface looks and feels dry, so if your coating requires a dry surface, follow these steps to test for dryness:

1. Use duct tape to affix 2'x2' sheets of clear plastic to three different areas of the pool: the shallow end floor, deep end floor, and shady side deep end wall.
2. Wait 4-5 hours.
3. Check inside the plastic for any signs of moisture from condensation.
4. If moisture is present, remove all three areas of plastic, let the surface dry another 24 hours, and repeat this test.

Step 5: Apply the paint

Always adhere to the square foot recommendations for applying your coating. Paint applied too thin won't provide adequate coverage or yield a long-lasting result; paint applied too thick may cause air bubbles, "alligatoring", or blistering.

To apply your paint:

1. Sweep or use a leaf blower to clear away any remaining leaves, paint chips, or debris.
2. Use masking tape to protect any areas you don't want painted, such as tiles or fittings. Tape plastic over larger areas.
3. Paint around small or difficult-to-reach areas using a paintbrush, such as drain openings, corners, and ladders.
4. Use a roller to paint the larger areas, beginning with the walls.
5. Once the walls are complete, begin the floor, starting in the deepest end.
6. Paint toward the shallow end, planning to finish at a ladder or stairs so you can exit without stepping on the wet paint.

Refer to your product recommendations to determine if application of second coat is necessary. If so, allow for the drying time stated on your product, then follow the same application steps.

Step 6: Add water and maintain proper chemistry

You may be eager to re-fill your pool, but allowing for adequate drying time is your last step in proper application. After waiting the recommended drying time specified on your product label, repeat the dryness test in Step 4.

When you are certain the new coating is completely dry, refill the pool using a constant, steady stream of water.

Routinely monitor your water chemistry to keep your paint looking vibrant and new. When levels are out of balance, the water may appear cloudy or the paint may wear too quickly.

Follow these recommended water levels for a painted surface:

- pH – 7.2-7.6
- Calcium hardness – 200-400 ppm
- Total alkalinity – 100-150

Tips for success

These tips will help you achieve and maintain a lasting, professional finish.

- Repainting your pool is also a good time to renovate your decks. Acrylic water-base deck paints can upgrade and renovate your Kool-Deck, textured or concrete deck.

- If rain interrupts your progress, a good rule of thumb is to add one day for the surface to dry for each day of rain.

- Avoid painting if the temperature is below 50° or above 85°, or if the overnight temperature will drop below 50°.
- Do not paint in direct sunlight.
- Always wear rubber gloves and protective eyewear when handling chemicals.
- Follow all safety precautions on power equipment.
- Never let your total alkalinity go below 80; low alkaline water can burn the paint, causing excessive wear.
- Check into your state's VOC regulations before purchasing paint.
- Visit the Ramuc Pool Paint website for additional information. (www.ramucpoolpaint.com)