

DIAMOND



POOLS

New Construction Handbook

2026 Edition

We are excited to start a new pool construction project with you! It is a big undertaking, and we have developed this guide, along with the Pool Lingo Handbook, to assist us in communication and education.

Please, carefully read both in their entirety.

Post-Contract Signing, Pre-Permit/Construction

- When the deposit is received, Kevin will schedule a Measurement & Material Meeting (MMM) and will schedule an Electrical Load Calculation to be completed by a licensed electrician if required/included in your contract. The electrician will reach out to you directly for the information required.
- At the MMM, we ask that all decision makers attend as we will:
 - Review the contract for specs and allotments.
 - Take detailed measurements of the yard and pool area, sometimes including drone footage.
 - Review step/baja shelf/bench configuration and depths
 - Start reviewing material selections in the Mobile Showroom
 - Place a Diamond Pools sign in yard.
- After the meeting, Kevin will finalize the pool renderings, submit for engineering, and begin permit preparations. Depending on the city, there may be additional documents that require signatures, which will be sent electronically.
- Kevin will send you a rendering with detailed information like setbacks (distances) from the fence line/house, depth profile, step profile, and equipment location. We can make adjustments and changes until it is exactly your vision - then we will send for signatures for approval.
 - Note: minor changes can be made to structure/shape, Baja shelf/steps/bench layout after engineering is completed, but major changes may require updated engineering which may result in an added fee if the change was after design approval. This includes adding an automated pool cover, major reconfiguration of the pool layout, or if major movement of the pool in relation to the yard is requested.
- When the plans are ready, we submit for permitting. We will follow up on the permit status weekly. Typical permit turnaround times are city/county dependent - some are around 3 weeks, and other 6+ weeks. The typical permit turnaround time was factored into the estimated start date.
- Any change orders will be confirmed in writing and sent for e-signatures. Depending on the request, the change order amount is due at the time of install, or the payment schedule may be updated and reflected on the change order.
- Construction communication: Kevin will create a group chat text thread with all decision makers, Trevor, Kevin, and Dani. This will be the primary communication thread for the duration of the project. Change orders will be sent via Google Workspace e-signature request.

Overview of Construction Process



Excavation



Rough Plumb/Electrical/Rebar



Gunite



Tile/Coping



Concrete



Equipment



Plaster



Finishing Touches & Beyond

Excavation

- When the permit is received, we will notify you on the exact start date planned.
- Excavation is the process of digging the pool and trenches for plumbing/electrical. It starts early (~8am) but the first few hours of day 1 are setting forms and typically quiet.
- Please clear the accessway in which heavy machinery will enter/exit the yard. This includes trash cans, vehicles, sheds, etc.
- As a courtesy, please consider notifying your immediate neighbors that excavation will be taking place so they have an opportunity to move their vehicles and close their windows to minimize dust inconvenience.
- Typically excavation takes 2 days to dig, and **we will place a temporary orange construction fence** in the access way from here through the rest of the project. Additionally secure fencing will need to be provided by homeowner as needed for pet/child securement.
- This is the beginning of the messy phase - at end of each day, crew will scrape the sidewalk, but the big clean will occur at the end
- Reminder that any sprinkler/landscaping lines that we hit while excavating will be capped at the point they break to prevent water loss. Diamond Pools is not responsible for repairing sprinkler/drip lines, nor for any landscaping/concrete that is damaged/misplaced in the access way or surrounding pool area. We will redirect any drainage towards appropriate lines.
- A baja shelf can be added/modified (usually free of charge) so long as it is decided on prior to excavation. Once the pool is dug, it requires increased labor and material to add/modify.
- Once a dig date is scheduled, we recommend starting to reach out to local pool chemical companies for an estimate. You can tell them you should be ready for a new pool startup (typically a 2-week process) in around 6-12 weeks (depending on time of year) and would like to get on their schedule. They will need to be updated when the plaster date is scheduled so they can start their service within 24 hours after the pool is filled.
- The pool will appear larger/deeper than the final product due to the fact that the walls of the pool are around 12" thick.
- The first payment is due at the time of excavation.



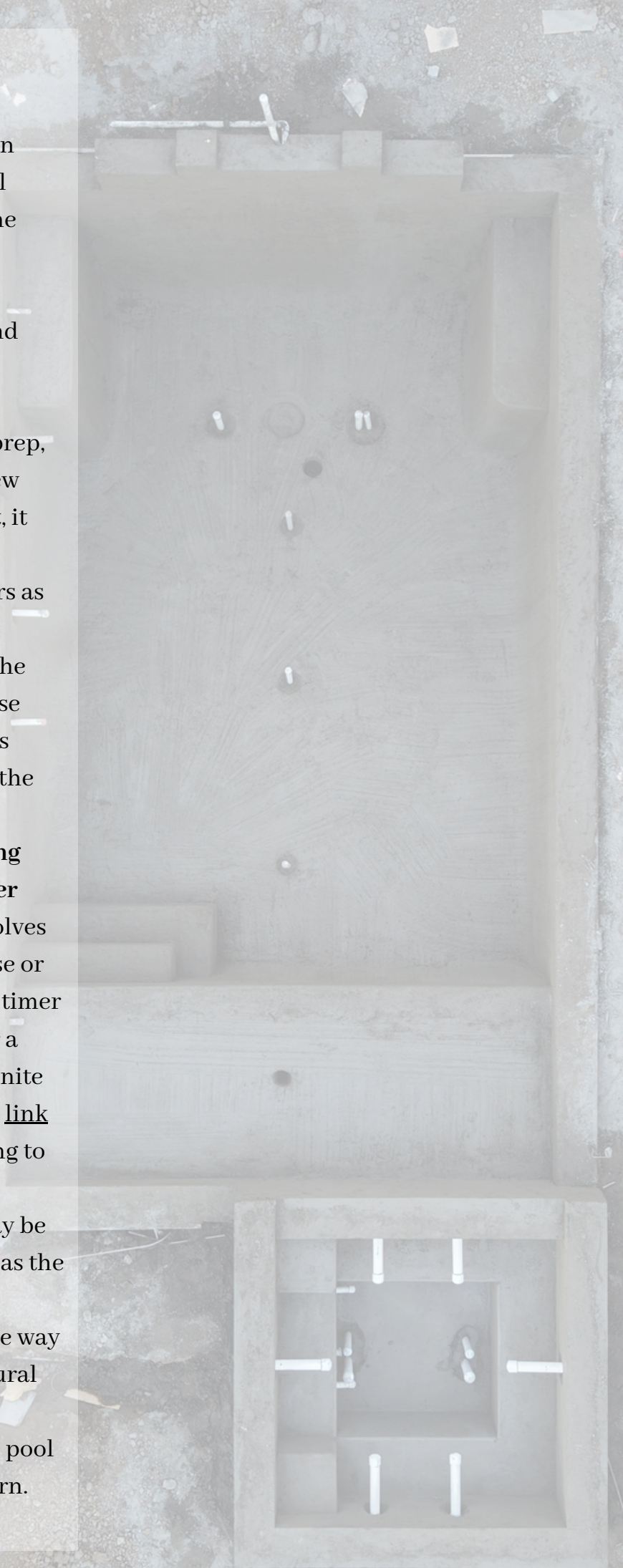
Rough Plumb Electrical Rebar

- This is part of project where all water suction and return lines are being run underground (**if you are considering adding a water/LED color features, now is the last chance for these type of changes.**)
- We recommend taking a photo of the backyard to have record of where conduits/pipes are run for when you may do future landscaping/construction projects.
- Unless specified otherwise, Diamond Pools is responsible for the drainage immediately surrounding the pool. Our drain lines will tie into existing rear yard drainage providing it is available and serviceable.
- If you would like to add any underground utilities to other areas of the yard, now is the time to do it. Also discuss with Trevor if you are considering putting pool solar on your house, or adding a heater in the future. This can influence the placement of equipment/plumbing lines so we can maximize efficiency for the future.
- Not all benches and steps require steel (generally only walls, floors, and major structural components get steel). The final finish height of the steps/benches/baja shelf may be different than it appears at this stage because of this.
- If not already done so, it is best if you have picked out your tile/coping as applicable. Tile comes up quickly after gunite and it is best to be sure the material is will-called and in stock.



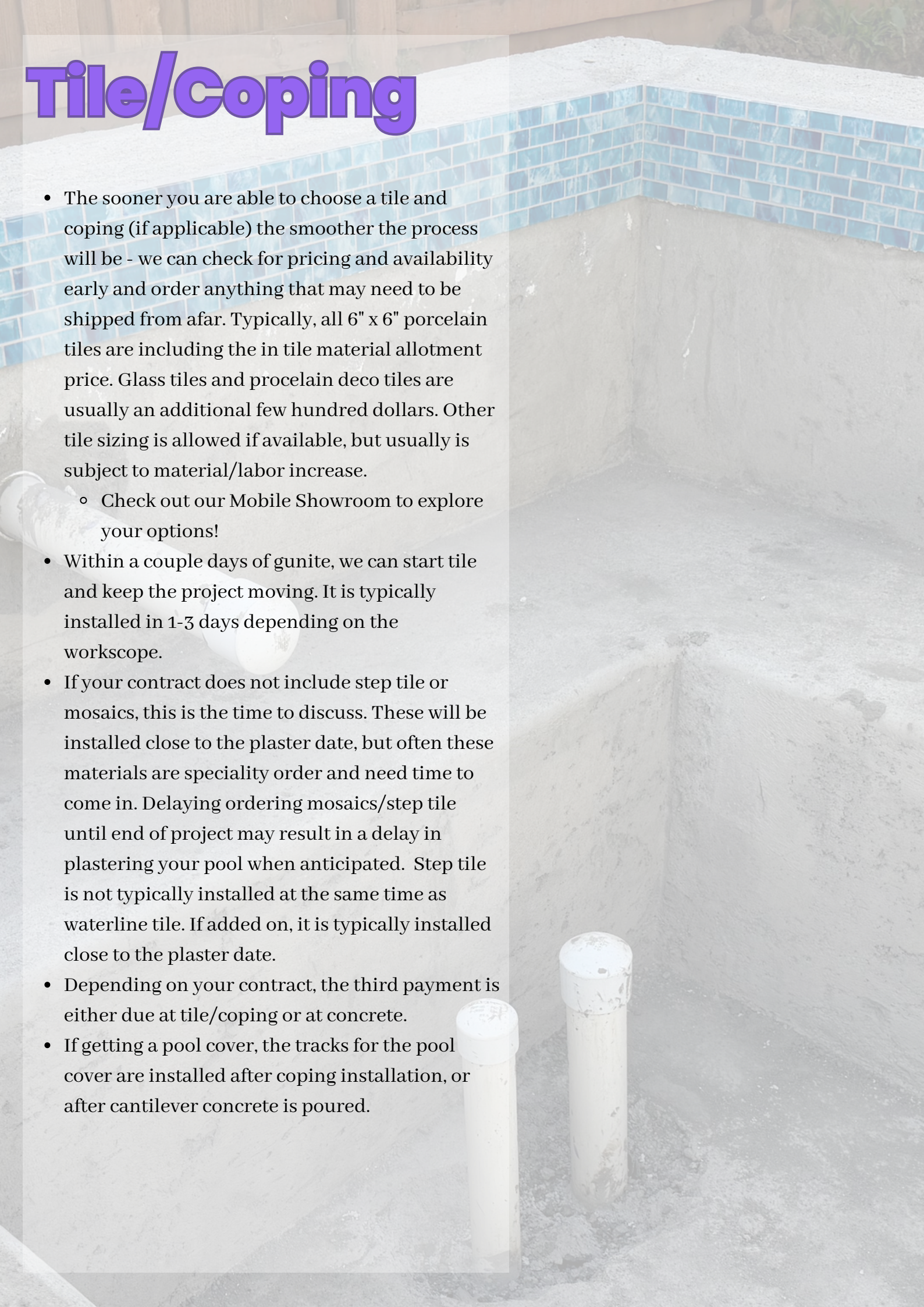
Gunite

- Gunite requires a pre-gunite inspection where the inspector will verify the pool meets the setback requirements and the rebar is installed according to the engineering.
- Please move all cars out of driveway and away from access way the night before gunite is scheduled.
- Gunite shoot day starts very early for prep, but noise does not usually start for a few hours. Once it is time to start the shoot, it will be noisy for several hours.
- This is the time to add umbrella holders as needed. You can add them on for \$50/holder if not already included in the contract (umbrella not included). Please notify the group chat at least a few days before so we can have them on site for the day of gunite.
- The morning after gunite, start **watering down the pool with a hose 2-3 times per day, for 7 days** (more is best). This involves heavy saturation if watering with a hose or setting up an automatic sprinkler on a timer in the pool to keep gunite hydrated for a stronger cure. It is ok to walk on the gunite to perform this process. Check out this [link](#) for a visual guide on what you are trying to do.
- As the gunite dries, spider cracking may be present on the surface. This is normal, as the surface dries faster than the rest of the structure. These cracks do not go all the way through, and will not cause any structural issues when the pool is filled.
- Water may puddle at the bottom of the pool - this is normal and no cause for concern.
- The second payment is due at gunite.



Tile/Coping

- The sooner you are able to choose a tile and coping (if applicable) the smoother the process will be - we can check for pricing and availability early and order anything that may need to be shipped from afar. Typically, all 6" x 6" porcelain tiles are including the in tile material allotment price. Glass tiles and porcelain deco tiles are usually an additional few hundred dollars. Other tile sizing is allowed if available, but usually is subject to material/labor increase.
 - Check out our Mobile Showroom to explore your options!
- Within a couple days of gunite, we can start tile and keep the project moving. It is typically installed in 1-3 days depending on the workscope.
- If your contract does not include step tile or mosaics, this is the time to discuss. These will be installed close to the plaster date, but often these materials are speciality order and need time to come in. Delaying ordering mosaics/step tile until end of project may result in a delay in plastering your pool when anticipated. Step tile is not typically installed at the same time as waterline tile. If added on, it is typically installed close to the plaster date.
- Depending on your contract, the third payment is either due at tile/coping or at concrete.
- If getting a pool cover, the tracks for the pool cover are installed after coping installation, or after cantilever concrete is poured.



Concrete

The background image shows a construction site for a pool. It features a large rectangular concrete formwork structure. Inside the form, there is a network of rebar (steel reinforcement) and some wooden forms. The site is outdoors, with a wooden fence visible in the background. The overall scene is in shades of blue and gray, with some yellow and white elements from the construction materials.

- After gunite/tile, things seem to slow down for a little while. The progress is not as obvious or exciting as the previous aspects of the build (don't worry, will get very exciting at the end!).
- Our crew will strip the forms off the gunite shell, backfill around the pool, run any additional trenches or lines that are needed for construction.
- Then they will start forming up for concrete or preparing for pavers, as well as the prepping the equipment pad. Decking is specified by the square footage amount listed on the contract. The equipment pad will be poured to match the type of concrete outlined in your contract, and will be gray broom finish if only coping is installed unless otherwise specified.
- The crew will set the elevations/pitch for the concrete, make forms out of wood, then add rebar and rock. The pool shell will be "bonded" to the concrete and requires a pre-deck inspection.
- If you would like to add umbrella holders or an accent band in the concrete, use the group chat to request a team meeting to review the number and locations prior to the day of concrete pour.
- On day of concrete pour, another early morning, with a quiet start and a louder period during the pour.
 - Please move all cars out of driveway and away from access way the night before concrete is schedule so the concrete trucks have the space they need.
- There will be several finishers who will hand trial the concrete with a broom, salt, or stamped finish.
 - Stamped concrete will have added release powder that sits on top of the concrete. We will clean off the release powder towards the end of the project as it helps protect the concrete as it is curing.
- Depending on time of year, you can walk on concrete around 48 hours after the pour. Animals should not walk on the concrete for at least 7 days so avoid claw marks that may scrape the concrete. Children should also be closely supervised.
- Our crew will return to strip the forms off the concrete and backfill as needed.

Equipment

- This is the part of the process where all filtration and cleaning equipment is installed, as well as any automation or lighting for the pool.
- The main brands we install are [Hayward](#) and [Pentair](#) equipment, and will be specified on your contract.
- After the pool is plastered and full of water, Trevor or Kevin will start up the equipment, and get it paired to your wifi/phone if included in your contract.
- They will provide a “Pool School” orientation; typically when they start up the pumps or during final inspection.
- After equipment is set, the crew will clean out the pool and prepare any outstanding items before plaster.
 - The gate needs to be regulation (as specified in the contract). Common fence safety requirements include outward swinging (toward the street), self-closing (spring loaded), and interior (in the backyard) latch that is a minimum of 60” height from ground. If not included in the contract and requested, we can alter gate to satisfy inspections/safety requirements at the cost of \$350.00 as a change order.
 - Kevin will coordinate to install door alarms or other safety barrier devices as necessary for pre-plaster inspection.
 - We will verify the plaster type and color you have chosen to install.
- Kevin will coordinate with you to schedule pre-plaster inspection. A homeowner will need to be present for the inspection if the inspector needs to gain access into your home to view the door alarms. At this inspection, the inspector reviews the equipment and the safety barriers. Some cities allow us to request an AM or PM inspection, but nothing is guaranteed. Inspections can occur from 8am-3/4pm.

Plaster

- ***EXTREMELY IMPORTANT*** during/after the plaster installation, it is the homeowners responsibility to ensure that no animals/children have access to the pool while filling. It presents a safety hazard for falling into pool/drowning, and any uneven foot/pawprints may stain the plaster prior to the curing process. Please ensure that all safety devices are in working order - door alarms, fencing/gates (to prevent anyone from entering backyard unsupervised and accidents occurring), etc. For more information on pool owner safety, please check out [this link](#).
- **On the day of plaster, a decision maker will need to be present on site in the morning to verify the plaster color if going with any pigmented plaster options.**
- Plaster is installed via a mixing truck, and pumped back to the pool location where it is hand trailed/finished.
- When **traditional smooth plaster** is finished, we will immediately begin filling the pool with water. In the event a water truck is needed (country properties usually), the homeowner is responsible for scheduling/providing the water truck(s). Use the group chat to request information on companies we have used in the past in your area. Based on how fast the pool is filling, it may require you to set an alarm to turn off the water during the night. It must fill constantly until it reaches the middle of the tile line (hence, waterline tile). The water cannot be stopped for any reason until the pool is full, even if it just running very very slowly.
- **For pebble applications**, it is a two day process: install day and acid wash. The install day will look identical to traditional smooth plaster other than the pebble is mixed into the plaster at the truck, and the glass is hand seeded on the surface after rough trialing. It is *normal* for the surface to look hazy and the pebble/glass to not “pop” at this time.
- The next day we will return to perform a polish and acid wash which strips the haze off and reveals the beautiful detail. They will begin with filling a small amount of water in the bottom of the pool (this is to protect the pool during the acid wash). When they are finished, they will immediately start filling the pool identical to instructions for traditional smooth plaster. They will also install any fittings/fixtures as necessary and remove any leftover plaster supplies.
- Start-up procedures and instructions are included in the contract, as well as on the Resources Tab of [diamondpools.net](#). We recommend following the [National Plaster Council's 28 -Day Start Up Recommendations](#). We have included a [log](#) that should be filled out by the licensed chemical company as well as the homeowner to document chemicals and brushing. The pool chemical company should be well versed in new plaster care. You may store the completed logs personally or you can email/mail them to admin@diamondpools.net for us to store.
- Reminder: plaster may be subject to mottling and discoloration because it is a natural substance and it is an inherent characteristic of plaster product
 - [Check out this informative link](#)
 - Please read through the Plaster Disclaimer that was signed in the contract documents - this contains vital information regarding your plaster care.
- The fourth payment is due at plaster installation.

Finishing Touches & Beyond

- Trevor or Kevin will get your pump(s) up and running when the pool is filled and to check for any above ground leaks in the equipment area. If available, they will conduct "Pool School" and help you get the automation on your phone if applicable.
- From there, a chemical service company will be required for the **2-week chemical start-up** of the plaster curing process, though a minimum of 28 days of very close plaster care is highly encouraged. During this time, the chemical company should be coming daily to balance the chemicals and brush the pool, and the homeowners should also brush the pool a minimum of 2-3 times a day until the plaster dust is gone.
 - The filter may need to be cleaned if it seems the plaster dust is lingering - ask your service company.
- We will coordinate with you to schedule for final inspection when the items that are assessed at final inspection are completed - this may be before final clean up, and does not mean we are "finished" with your job.
- Kevin will often take final photos and drone footage during final inspection, as well as provide any extra Pool School education you would like, and request a review on Google, Yelp, or Facebook.
- Our crew will work on any outstanding items, like mastic installation if we did coping and concrete to surround, the pool cover will be finished, final clean up, etc.
- The final payment will be due at Workslope Completion.

Warranty/Post Construction Information

- After final inspection has been signed off and the final clean up completed, **Diamond Pools is available for any construction related questions you have by submitting a Warranty Request on our website or using the group chat.** We are active members of the community and pride ourselves on the positive relationships we often build with our former customers.
 - Any equipment function issues will be directly handled by the warranty team at the respective equipment company. You can register your equipment for warranty using the information provided. We can also assist you with filing the warranty information.
 - For pool cover related questions, we encourage you to contact the pool cover company directly first - Pool Covers Inc. [\(707\) 864-6674](tel:7078646674)
 - For filter cleaning and equipment maintenance, contact your pool service/start up company