What type of pond pump do I need?

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Shirley Aquatics, Experts in helping you decide what pond pump to buy since 1939

At Shirley Aquatics we pride ourselves on our extensive knowledge of pond pumps as well as our wide range of pond pumps.

We stock an extensive selection of pond pumps from some of the world's best manufactures such as Oase, Hozelock, Bermuda, laguna and Evolution aqua.

We also carry many different types of pond pumps such as fountain pumps, solar pumps, floating fountain pumps, waterfall pumps, filter pumps, solid handling pumps, external pond pumps, the list goes on and on! If you can't find the pond pump you are looking for the please contact us as we will do our very best to source it for you.

Over the years we have tried and tested hundreds of different pond pumps and refined our product range to suit the needs of every pond keeper. Whether you are after a dedicated external pond pump for your koi filtration system or you are after a solar powered pond pump to provide some movement and running water in your garden we have the lot.

We have many experienced staff on hand to help you make the right choice of pond pump so please feel free to contact us to discuss your needs.

Is a Pond pump really necessary?

You don't get pond pumps in nature and yet we have some beautiful lakes around us stocked up with lots of fish and plants, so is a pond pump really necessary?

Often in natural bodies of water you have a natural source of running water, with either a stream or spring flowing into the lake. This provides a natural source of running water that adds oxygen and also helps to flush away nutrients or fish waste. In bodies of water that do not have this such as man-made lakes, a natural balance has been created between the levels of fish in the lake producing waste and an incredible wealth of plants and bacteria that help to remove the waste and maintain a

balance. Where this balance has not been achieved you often see algae problems, as the algae acts as a filter sucking up the excessive nutrients.

You may choose to recreate this natural environment without using a pond pump. To do this you would need to introduce a wide variety of pond plants to act as a natural filter and this balance may take a number of years to achieve, especially on a small pond.

In most cases, the quantity of fish required and the number of plants installed does not lead to clear water.

Fitting a pond pump and pond filter will ensure you provide your fish with the best quality of water to live in. A pond pump will provide your pond with a large supply of oxygen by constantly moving the water. The action of the pond pump on the water will also help to drive out carbon dioxide.

Let’s not forget that most of us like relaxing sound of running water in the garden and this is only possible with the use of a pond pump. Think of the pond pump as the work horse, driving your pond water to where ever you need it to go, whether this is through a filter or to the top of waterfall or just an attractive fountain as a centre piece in your pond.

What’s the most important consideration when choosing a pond pump?

The biggest consideration when selecting a pond pump should be is this right for me?

Is it big enough to do the job?

Bear in mind you can always turn down a pond pump that’s a bit too powerful but you can’t make a smaller pump work any harder.

Is it low maintenance?

A pond pump might seem like a bargain, but has it got a big enough strainer? You will often find that cheaper pumps may have a smaller hole size in their casing as the motor will not take solids that are too large. This means that the motor may not be as good a quality as a pond pump with a bigger strainer size and it also means you will have to clean it out a lot more regularly.

Is it going to cost a lot to run?

A great many pond pumps these days are low running cost, but it’s worth checking the wattage. Manufacturers such as Oase and Hozelock realise that everyone’s focus is on fuel economy so their

higher quality pumps generally use less electricity. Please check that the pond pump you are about to buy is not going to end up costing you a lot more to run in the future

If you already have a pump in your pond that’s been there for some time it might be costing you more than you think. Pond pumps need to be on 24 hours a day so an existing pond pump that is usinig 300w is costing you on average £393 per year to run. A modern pump using only 60w will cost you as little as £70 per year to run. Therefore it would make a lot of sense to replace your pond pump now as it will have paid for itself in 12 months and reduced your electricity bill dramatically.

What types of pond pump are available?

There are many different types of pond pump but it’s all down to what you need the pump for and if there are any other parameters you need to consider. In short, there are four types. Pond filter pumps, Fountain pumps, combined pond pump and filters and water feature pumps

Pond filter pumps

A pond filter pump is designed primarily to deliver water to a filter to help keep the pool clean. In most cases they are designed to handle solids. They have a coarse strainer surrounding the motor which does not get blocked very easily and helps to deliver dirty water from the pond to the filter. 20 years ago most pond pumps had a fine strainer or even a foam prefilter, this was to protect the pump from anything that may harm it. The problem with this was that you had to clean the filter on the pump a lot more regularly than the pond filter.

Thankfully these days pond filter pumps have stronger motors that can easily handle solids, they deliver the dirtiest water from the pond to where it can be dealt with properly, inside the pond filter. As a result you do not have to keep taking the pond pump out of the pond to clean it.

Pond filter pumps can also be used to run waterfalls, cascades and have a number of different applications that just require a certain amount of water at a certain height. Pond filter pumps can also be further divided into submersible pumps, external pumps, mixed use pumps and low running cost pumps

Fountain pumps

Fountain pumps are designed to provide an attractive spray of water that adds oxygen to the pond and also an attractive centre piece. Most fountain heads have very fine holes in them so they can get

blocked up quite easily. For this reason the majority of fountain pumps have a fine strainer over them to prevent the fountain from getting blocked up.

If you are looking for a pump that provides water for a fountain but also provides a good flow to your filter, this can be difficult. Especially if you don’t want to keep taking the pump out every five minutes to clean it, or have to keep taking the fountain head apart. We often suggest having a separate filter pump and a separate fountain pump as the needs of the two are often so conflicting. There are some good pond pumps that manage to do the two jobs successfully such as the Oase Aquarius range.

Combined Pond pump and filters

These are becoming very popular as you have one piece of equipment sitting in the pond which pumps water, filters the water and has a UV to kill Algae. They have one mains cable and are often very economical to run. The down side is that they are really only for smaller ponds and that you have to take the unit out of the pond to clean it. But on the whole , as long as you choose the correct one for your size of pond the work very well and are probably one of the most convenient ways of supplying a pump and filter for your pond.

Water feature pumps

Self-contained water features also need a pump to drive the water around. Water feature pumps tend to differ from others in that they have a very limited intake filter and are extremely small. They still have a reasonable amount of power but are designed to fit into small spaces. They are not generally designed to be placed directly into the pond, but a self-contained water feature does not often suffer from the same amount of debris as a pond so there is no need for too much filtration. The Oase aquarius universal pumps are very good at this role and are used frequently in water feature displays.

How do I install a pond pump?

Submersible pond pumps are easy to install. They can be placed directly into the pond and in nearly all cases come with 10 meters of cable. You need to wire this cable into a weather proof junction box or via a plug in RCD. The cable can be buried either in some old hose pipe or some electrical conduit. The cable itself is completely waterproof and the above precautions are only suggestions to make sure the cable does not get punctured by a spade or fork in future years.

A submersible pond pump needs to be placed ideally at the deepest part of the pond. You should make sure that you use hose clips or jubilee clips to secure any hoses to the pond pump or pond filter

and it’s also a good idea to attach a piece of string to the pump so you can raise it without having to pull on the mains cable.

Love Koi and ponds? Why not check out our sister site Shirley Koi to see our finest premium Japanese Koi available