

NSW POOL BARRIER INFORMATION.

The requirements for child-resistant barriers vary depending on when the pool was built and where the pool is located.

There are 3 different Pool Safety Standards that apply in NSW, depending on when the pool was constructed:

- AS 1926-1986, fences and gates for private swimming pools which applies to pools constructed prior to 30 August 2008.
- AS 1926.1 - 2007, swimming pool safety, Part 1 safety barriers for swimming pools which applies to pools constructed In-between 1 September 2008 to 30 April 2013.
- AS1926.1 - 2012, swimming pool safety, Part 1 safety barriers for swimming pools constructed after 1 May 2013.

Pools Built before 1 August 1990,

Access to the Pool from the house must be restricted at all time. Windows and doors may form part of the barrier, but they must be compliant.

Pools Built after 1 August but before 1 July 2010,

The pool must be surrounded by a fence that separates the pool from the house, some exemptions apply if the pool is part of:

- A very small property (less than 230 square metres).
- A large property (2 hectares or over).
- A waterfront property.

Pools built from 1 July 2010,

All new pools must be surrounded by a fence that separates the pool from the house.

Note: If the swimming pool barrier is modified, altered or rebuilt, then the current *Swimming Pools Act 1992*, *Swimming Pools Regulation 2008* and Australian Standard AS1926.1-2012 is applied and previous exemptions cease.

Inflatable pools:

Owners of premises with swimming pools, including inflatable swimming pools, must ensure their pools comply with fencing laws. If you own or buy an inflatable swimming pool, observe all warning labels attached to the packaging and product. The warning label information may vary according to the pool's height.

Small inflatable pools under 300mm in height

Inflatable pools under 300mm in height should carry the following warning labels:

- Pool owners, parents and carers need to be aware of the potential for drowning even in shallow water. You should always supervise children when they are using these products.
- Ensure that the water is kept pure. Water left in inflatable pools for periods of time can become contaminated and cause illness.
- Empty the pool and store it safely (away from young children) when it is not in use.

Large inflatable pools 300mm or more in height

Inflatable pools 300mm or more in height should carry the following warning labels:

- The same three warnings as for smaller pools (see above) and
- Pool fencing laws affect this product. Before you buy this pool you should consult your local council.

For large inflatable pools of 300mm or more in height consult your council on fencing requirements, child-resistant barriers and a warning sign display.

Visit the pool safety checklists page on the NSW Swimming Pool Register for further information.

Key Pool fence measurements:

In NSW, a pool fence must:

- be at least 1.2m high (as measured from the finished ground level)
- not leave a gap at the bottom bigger than 10cm from the finished ground level
- if a boundary fence is part of the pool fence, the barrier must be 1.8m high
- not have gaps of more than 10cm between any vertical bars in the fence
- if containing horizontal climbable bars, have these spaced at least 90cm apart
- perforated or mesh barriers must have holes no greater than 13mm for fence heights of 1.2m
- perforated or mesh barriers of 1.8m height with holes greater than 13mm must not exceed 100mm
- The pool fence must be well maintained and in good working order

Non-Climbable zone:

To prevent children climbing over fencing into the pool area, the laws require pool owners to make sure they maintain a 'non-climbable zone' around the pool.

- Any trees, shrubs or any other objects such as a barbeque, pot plants, toys, ladders and chairs must not be within the 90cm non climbable zone.
- This zone is measured in an arc shape from the top of the pool fence arching towards the ground.
- It also includes the space extending 30cm inside the pool area – this space should also be cleared of any potential footholds or handholds.
- Any horizontal climbable bars on the pool fence must also be spaced AT LEAST 90cm apart.

If your pool area does not meet these requirements, you can contact a licensed builder, pool technician or fencing contractor to carry out work in line with these safety requirements.

Doors in pool barrier:

If you have a door that forms part of a pool barrier you must make sure that:

- It self closes without the application of manual force.
- It self-latches and requires manual release.
- The latching device is at least 150cm off the ground.
- It has a non-climbable zone of 90cm that is at least 120cm above the floor.
- It does not open towards the pool.
- It does not have any pet doors.

Pool fence and gate maintenance:

All fence bolts, screws and fasteners must be tight and in good order. Any loose bolts, screws and fasteners should be tightened or replaced. Self-closing gate hinges, locks and latches should be sprayed with lubricating oil or silicone.

Manufacturers of the pool fence and gate should provide written instructions on how to maintain your pool fence and gate. This may include the regular replacement of springs and regular spraying of self-closing gate hinges, locks and latches with lubricating oil or silicone. Proper maintenance can help to prevent many of the faults relating to self-closing and self-latching gates.

Compliance with the Building Code of Australia:

Swimming pool barriers are required to meet performance requirements set out in the Building Code of Australia (BCA). From 1 September 2018 these requirements can be met using either a performance solution or a deemed-to-satisfy (DTS) solution.

A deemed-to-satisfy solution follows a set recipe of what, when and how to do something. It uses the DTS solutions from the BCA, which include materials, components, design factors, and construction methods that, if used, are deemed to meet the performance requirements.

A performance solution on the other hand is unique for an individual situation. These solutions are often flexible in achieving the outcomes and encourage innovative design and technology use.