G235
Steel Inground Pool
Installation Manual
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1. Introduction:

A. This manual is intended to guide you through the complete step by step installation process in an easy to understand manner.

B. First (Very Important) – Call Dig Safe (888-344-7233) They will let you know if you have any underground service lines such as water, gas, electrical in the projected area of where you want your pool located.

C. Apply for a building permit. Your city or town may require certain inspections during the building process.
   a) Be aware there maybe code restrictions that apply to you
   b) Boundary space requirements/setbacks
   c) Distance from septic and leaching fields

2. Choosing a site for your pool:

A. Pool should be set 6” above ground level (if at all possible – for natural ground water run off.)

B. If significant grade change exists from one side to the other, the best alternative is to split the difference.
   a) Explanation: If you have a 2’ grade change you should build up the low side 1’ and then down the high side 1’. (Photo #1 - below)

Note: Excavation
Before starting to excavate, be sure to have a dump site lined up to dump the excavated material.

Get the excavator operator to study the drawing of you particular size pool and stress the importance of the fairly close tolerances for the walls and inside finish. In particular, ensure that the width and length of the deep art of the excavations not too great, since it is better to have a little extra hand trimming after the wall are firmly in position, than to find that you are trying to install the walls on thin air.

The depth of the initial excavation will depend on how deep you intend the pool walls to be in the ground. The best way to tackle a sloping site is illustration above.

b) You want to try to set walls on undisturbed ground
c) If you must build up the ground, it must be compacted in stages no more than 1 foot at a time. If it is not compacted enough, you may find that pool walls will settle making them unleveled and the concrete patio will crack.
3. Time to stake out and pin pool (Photo #2)

A. When locating your pool, you will want to square it up with your house, fence or lot lines, etc. There is nothing worse than finishing this project and seeing your pool is off one-way or another. This can give you a very unprofessional look.

B. The easiest way to do this is to come off the object you want to square up to (a few feet from both ends) with 2 pins or stakes using a string line from one to the other. This will now be your reference point for your pool. Make a simple sketch showing this line and the pool with all your dimensions from each corner of the pool to both pins ("A" & "B" – 1 sketch). Having this reference point sketch will always allow you to re-pin the pool after you dig.

View - Also note, A1, A2 and B1 and B2 (see below).

Level Stake

Drive a stake in the ground approximately 5 feet away from the pool. The height of this stake should be set at the height of which the top of the steel walls are to be set at.

The depth of the initial excavation will depend on how deep the pool walls are to be in the ground.
C. You now have your string line in place for your pool walls. Starting at your shallow end corner pin you are now ready to plot out the pool for the dig. Measure from the beginning of the corner on the shallow pin, out to the to the end of the shallow point. Put second pin on the string line. The next pin placement will go at the end of the slope, and the following pin will be at the end of the bottom. Now measure from both corners and pin out for the width. Put these pins in for temporary use. Now you must square them to the other side you started with (never moving your first line of pins).

D. When squaring the pool, measure from opposite corners (Diagonal) to each other. For squaring move those pins until you have the same measurements both ways while keeping your width at what it should be. Note: It is very, very important to keep everything square.

E. From your 4 corner pins you can now go out 5’ in both directions from the corner. You will now have 2 pins for each corner pin. These will be your reference points to find your 4 corners again.

4. Digging your Pool:

A. Start stripping the surface grass and topsoil. You will want to make 2 piles and keep the grass with topsoil separate from the rest of the dirt you will be removing (as this top layer grass with topsoil cannot be used for backfilling). The topsoil and grass can be used later when the pool and patio are complete for a topcoat fill around the pool. Now you have to mark out the pool with your pool print. Once you have marked your 4 corners, the next step is to mark off for the shallow to deep end, as well as slope, bottom and back wall. Then you will want to go and add 2 ½ feet all the way around the pool – this is the space needed for the braces.

B. Now go to the string line from the shallow corners and measure down the string line to the shallow end length.

Example: (Photo #5) 16’x32’ pool: Measure from the beginning of the shallow corner 8 ft out (that’s to the end of the shallow), put a pin on the string line. Now measure from end shallow pin out 14 ft, put in a pin (this is the beginning of the flat). Then measure out 6 ft put in a pin (this is the far corner of the flat bottom). Then measure 4 ft out from that pin (this is the deep end corner). Repeat the same measurement on the opposite side. Next you will be measuring for the deep end wall. Measure 4 ft in from both end corners and put 2 stakes in the in the space between – which will be 8’. It is a good time to now mark the lines where your strings are located around the perimeter of the pool. You can use either paint (ground marker paint) or you could use some regular lime sprinkled out as well to create this temporary template. You do this just in case any of the string lines have to come out when you dig - you will still have a reference line. When marking out for your braces, the braces are set 2½ ft out from the string lines all the way around the pool. First, mark for this measurement with paint or lime completely around the pool. If you have a step in the pool (steps are generally 4’x8’), you will want to allow for the 2½ ft around the step as well. From the string lines of the pool wall to the painted lines 2½ ft back - this will be your flat shelf for the pool walls and braces.
D. You are now ready to start digging the area. Take down the string lines, leaving the pins in place. Start stripping off all the topsoil that will need to be removed – keeping this topsoil/grass separate from the rest of the dirt (as after your pool and patio are in you can use this topsoil and grass for a topcoat fill in around the area). Probably the easiest way to dig the pool is at this point to treat the area as if it were to be flat (one level). Keeping in mind your pool walls are 42” tall and your coping 2 ¾”. Assuming that your yard is flat, you will want to have your finished pool height 6” above the surrounding yard (for water run off). Example: 42” wall height, + 2 ¾” = 44 ¼”, now subtract 6” (for aboveground measurement) = your total measurement to the bottom of your wall panels would be 38 ¼”. Now whatever mark you are shooting on your transit or site level, add 38 ¼” to that and this is what you will shoot for your flat grade. You also want to dig your trench from the pool area to the filter location at least 3 ft wide and 3 ft deep. Once you have your hole flat you will need to put the string lines back in place. Then re-square to make sure that you are correct. Measure from the shallow ends out 8’ on both long sides put a pin in each, then run a string line across from one to the other. This will mark out your shallow area. Your slope will start to angle down from there. Measure 14 ft down from the 8 ft and again place the pins on each side – this will mark the bottom of your pool slope. Run a string line 6 ft down from pins and string across. Now go to the back wall put in 2 pins 4 ft from each end towards the center. Go to the shallow end and do the same, running 2 string lines from the shallow to deep. Now the square you have in the center of the deep end is actually your bottom flat. Your depth for this area is 8 ft. in the deep end, so you need to figure dig depth. If the deep end will be 8’ and your current dig flat is 3 ft 6 inches (reference: wall panel height), you will need to dig down 4 ft 6 inches (8 ft – 3 ft 6 inches = 4 ft 6 inches) deeper in the bottom of the deep end. To start the slope, from the shallow to the deep – remember you are only sloping down to the square in the center, not all the way across. When it comes to the slope and flat bottom in the deep end you want to over dig 2” to allow for the material you are going to be putting in. It is advisable to have someone with a flat shovel shave the sides (angles) as you are digging with the machine. Getting this prefect at this point is not necessary, just as close as possible. After you dig, it is time to set the walls.

5. Setting your pool walls (photo’s 6A, 6B, 7, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B, 10A, 10B and 10C)

A level foundation of the undisturbed earth should be provided where the wall sections will be installed. A level area where the “A” frames will be placed should also be provided at this time. As final hand trimmings of the excavation is being made, the wall panels should be lowered onto the working border and leaned against the side of the excavation. Make a final check to see that the skimmer panel and both return panels are in their desired positions. If the panels have been correctly placed, the Next step is to both them together.

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Photo #6A  
Photo #6B

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Bolt panels and A-frames together. One A-frame is required at each panel joint.

Square the pool making all the measurements match the pool layout diagram.

Level the panels using a 4’ level or sight level. Check level of panels at panel joints. Shim panel to level.

*Note: Check the level of curved panels at the center of the panel. After panels are leveled, double check the pool to be sure it is still square.*
If deck supports are to be used, they should be installed at the same time as the A-frames. Deck supports are to be installed at each panel joint and corner and on every wall brace. Deck support consists of 2 A-Frame upright and 2 horizontal braces.

Secure panels in place with stake rod and/or anchor pin & plate. If the ground is soft, also drive wooden stakes down in front of the panels to hold them in place.

A string line can be used to align panels. Once aligned tighten all nuts and bolts on panels and A-frames.
Get yourself some 8”x16” patio blocks (you will want to place the blocks against the string lines). Start your first block in the corner. Your next block will be \( \frac{1}{2} \) under the end of the first panel and \( \frac{1}{2} \) under the next. You want a block to be under each panel joint. As you are doing this panel by panel, you will be putting the bolts in and braces (but, don’t tighten them down yet). You should have a panel layout that shows what panels go where. There are extra holes (more than needed) in the panels, generally 5 bolts is the correct amount you want to use.

6. Installing the Step (Photo’s 11A, 11B and 12):

You will notice that the step has no holes to bolt into. You will have to drill them out. You will need a small piece of coping to lay on the top of the wall next to the step (this will be your level). Now set the step to the top of the coping of the wall (same height as the top of the step). Flush the step (front) to panel on either side. If you have some vice clamps you can clamp them to hold it in place while you drill the holes. Drill from the existing holes in the wall through the step and then bolt these together. There are PVC legs for the underside of the step. Place 2 in the back to hold up the step. Check for square again at this point. Now make sure wall panels are flush in the front then go around and tighten them up. Making sure that the tops of the panels are flush. * Note: If you have a Cantilever Step – call us for details (1-800-983-7665)

Bolt in-wall step in place.
One A-frame is required on both sides of the step.
Use blocks or step supports to level the step.

Photo #11A

Photo #11B
Leveling Panels:

Now go around to every panel joint and put your transit leveling stick on top of the panel. Take a measurement at each joint. Go back and see what your bottom panel measurement was (the shelf) and deduct that 42" of actual panel height to find out what you are looking to shoot on panel tops. Get a marker and shoot your first panel. If the panel is too low, mark on the panel top (measurement up needed) how much it has to go up to be level. For example: (up ¾), if it is too high or if it has to go down - do this the same way (down ½”). Get a package of housing shakes, usually sold in a bundle, to be used as shims. If your first panel has to go up ¾” take a shovel and put it under the panel and pry the wall up. Put the thinner side of the shim under the panel and on top of the patio block (between them). Then tap shim in with a hammer or a sledge until it is raised to the correct amount. This is done from the inside of pool towards the outside of the pool. If one is not enough to raise the wall to the height you need, put another on top of it. Don’t worry if they stick out into the pool (they can be broken off later). After you have gone around to every panel of your pool, your pool should now be level. Next, go to the steps to

In-wall Step Installation:

There are a variety of walk in step packages available. The pool can be ordered to accommodate a 4'/6'/8' straight or curved wall step depending on the shape and size. The step can be installed in different locations. If the pool is ordered with a step position the panel mix will change to suit the step position.

Review the step manufacturers instructions for proper installation. Instructions will vary from different manufacturers.

Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

- Bolt the step in between two steel wall panels making sure the top of the step will be leveled with the top of the coping (not the top of the steel wall)
- The back of the step must be supported and these supports can be used to level the step. If you do not have adjustable step supports concrete blocks can be used.
- The step should be leveled to the same slope as the deck, which will slope away from the pool.
- When pouring concrete around the pool, be sure to pour concrete behind the step.
- The step should be backfilled in the same manner the rest of the pool is backfilled (crushed stone or clear sand).
make sure each side is equal to each other. Now you need a 4 ft carpenters level. Put the level on one side of the ledge on the step. You want to have a pitch back from the front to back of the step. On your level you are pitching back ½ bubble - ½ in and ½ out of the level markings. Once you do this check across the back it should be level from side to side. Now put in your PVC step poles in with blocks under them for support.

8. Plumbing Panels:

Put a level on the front of the panels, top to bottom to make sure that panel is plumb—level from up to down. When that is complete, go to the back (outside) of the panel. In the bottom lip you will find holes, use 2 stake rods (rebar) in each of the panels. Pound the stake in ½ way to keep the panel from moving. Now go to the back of the brace and drive in a stake ½ way down in. On brace tighten up the adjustment nuts on the top. At the step, you will also want to put 4 or 5 rebar in front of the step pinning them against the front bottom face. Drive these in ½ way so that the steps will not move forward. This is your last point (chance) to check the square of the pool. It does not have to be perfect but as close as you can make it. If you have any space (gaps) under the panel, throw some material (dirt) under them. This is so that when you pour your concrete collar you will not get concrete passing under the wall from the outside wall area (perimeter) of the pool. Next you want to run your main drain line from the bottom deep end leaving the pipe stubbed up a few feet. Dig a trench up the side slope, under the wall and out past your 2½’ area to be poured. Once this is done, it is time to pour the concrete collar around the pool. You want the collar to be 10”-12” deep and all the way to the back of the 2½’ trench and the same behind the pool steps.

Here is a sample guide to how much concrete you will need to complete this part:
- 16’x 32’ = 6 yards
- 18’x 36’ = 7 yards
- 20’x 40’ = 8 yards

9. Pouring the concrete collar (Photo 13A, 13B and 13C):

Cementing the Pool Walls and A-frames in Place

Before pouring concrete, be sure that the pool walls are level and square. The main drain line has been run, A-frames, deck supports, skimmer support and ladder supports are all installed and are level.

You will now pour concrete around the total perimeter of the pool forming a concrete beam.

Pour the concrete behind the panels around the total perimeter of the pool including the area behind any walk in staircase. The concrete should be 8” deep by 30” wide, which should fill the width of the excavation, this will form your concrete beam. Extra concrete should be poured at each A-frame to a depth of 12” to 14”.
You can have the concrete very wet so that it will flow easier around the pool. It is easiest if 1 or 2 people get in the trench with shovels pulling it around the pool as the concrete is poured into the trench. You also can order the least expensive mix of concrete. The more stone in the mix the better as you are just using this for weight (generally a 2500 mix). Now that you have concrete all the way around the walls, you will need to take your transit and stick and recheck your level and plumb. At this point, you have time to make any necessary adjustments that are needed.

10. Installing wall fittings, skimmer, returns, light and main drain:

The skimmer will be hung on the outside with 4 holding screws from the inside. There will be one gasket on the inside face. The return fittings will push through from the inside out with a lock nut on the outside (as gasket is pre-glued on already). The light niche goes from the inside out and it will have a holding ring on the back. You will need to put the gasket on the inside of the niche. For the main drain you want to dig out about 18” at the deep end. You will have 2 main drains to be installed. They will need to be placed 3’ apart from each other. The top of the main drain should be at the finished depth of the deep end (8 ft).

How the main drains are plumbed is as follows:
A 1 ½” PVC “T” is required at the center between the 2 drains, then a line going to each drain, As well as 1 line going straight back to the valve at the pump.

11. Pin the Inside of the Pool:

It is now the time to pin inside the pool (Again, we are basing this on a 16’x32’ pool build). Measure 8’ from the shallow end wall on both sides, then place a pin on each side and string line these pins across. Next add a pin in 14’ from the end shallow pin and string line these pins across. Next you need to go out 6’ from the bottom of the end slope pin, placing a pin here and string a line across. Now across the back end 4’ from both corners put pins (you will have 8’ opening along the back wall). Repeat these measurements on the opposite shallow end. Next, run 2 lines from the deep to the shallow end of the pool. These string lines you are now running should all be 2” up on the wall panel as this will be your finished depth. Using the square you have in the deep end, you can now find the center of your bottom pad. Stand in the deep end where the intersections of the lines are and drop a pin and let it fall. Where the pin falls tap it in.
a few inches, then drop another pin in from the same point and it should hit the head of the pin that is already in the ground. If this happens, then pound in the pins. This will now be your corner pins of the bottom pad. From the spot where you dropped the pins in, measure down 4’8” and tie a string line at that level on the pin. Take this string and bring it back to where the slope starts 14’ back and tie it off at 2” above the panel. Do the same for the other side. You will now need to go to the deep end flat corners and measure from where you dropped the pins. Measure down 4’8” - tie off these pins. Now bring the line up to the back wall corner pins, tie it off 2” up wall panel. You can now remove your cross stings from the shallow to deep end and from side to side. What you are left with is the outline of the pool bottom at the finished grade. This is what you should have now inside the pool.

Now is the time to break off any shims sticking out into the inside of the pool.

12. Putting in your bottom material to the string lines (Photo 14A, 14B and 14C):

It is time to start putting in your bottom material to the string lines. It is easier to start in the deep end and work your way to the shallow end. Different pool bottoms can be used. Premix, which is a premixed mixture of concrete and vermiculite, which you just need to add water to, or straight vermiculite, which is 1 part concrete mixed with 2 bags of vermiculite. A sand cement bottom would be 4 parts mason sand and 1 part Portland cement or stone dust (a grey powdery material). Any of these will do. Which ever you decide to use – take your time, as any imperfections, dips, footprints, lumps will show through the liner. If you use a premix or vermiculite after it is dry, broom it down. Anything that maybe loose will come out and a little piece of the vermiculite will seem like a sharp rock under the liner.

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13. Installing Pool Coping (Photo 15):

Place the coping pieces completely around the pool, so you are sure you will have enough and if you need to cut you are not shorting yourself somewhere else. Put on your coping corners first. The tech screws are self-tapping. You just drill them into the flat lip on the coping on the pool wall. You need to put a screw in every 6” on the corners and on the straight coping, screws should be 12” apart (this is sufficient). Keep an eye on the coping making sure it is straight. It should be pulled all the way back tight against the wall. Every joint will have a coping clip that covers the joint.

14. Installing Wall Foam:

You will need to get a metal rake or a push broom and the roll of wall foam. Take the roll of wall foam and place it over the rake/broom handle, so that you will now have a holder (using the rake/broom pool as the handle) you can now hang on to. Next, sweep or using a rag, wipe down your walls to remove any debris to allow adhesive a clean surface to adhere to before putting the
foam on. Once your walls are wiped down, you can now spray a straight line of adhesive under the coping, be careful not to get any on the pool coping as it is hard to remove. Spray a big x on the panel with the adhesive spray and a line across the bottom (this will be plenty to hold the foam to the wall). You will want to do this in sections of about 10’-12’ at a time. When placing the foam, you will want to place it so that it is touching the bottom of the coping (note: the foam will hang a few inches on the floor bottom, you can either leave it or trim it off once the foam is completely installed). Take the back of a broom (flat side) and brush up and down the walls – making sure there are no bumps in the foam. Do not foam by the steps at all, start and end at the panels adjoining the steps on either side. When you are done with the foam, you can now trim out for the fittings (returns, skimmer, light, etc). You will want to trim out at least 1” extra around each fitting so that the liner will fit flush against the gaskets and not the foam.

Working in the step area - take off the strips and screws on the steps to expose the step gasket. Now it is time to pull out all your internal pins and string lines (make sure you fill in the holes they leave). It is now time to go to installing the liner.

15. Installing the Liner (Photo’s 16A, 16B, 16C and 16D): (Note: It is advisable to do this on a warm sunny day!)

If you have a shop vacuum or liner vacuum, place this over by the skimmer. Run a hose line through the skimmer, down the wall 3” from the bottom. This will allow you to suck the liner in place. Place the liner box in the shallow end (it is marked which side up). *Note: Do not use anything sharp to open this box. Unfold the liner, find the deep end corners and pass them to a person outside of the pool so that they can walk the corners down to the deep end and clip it in place (it will stay by itself). Start by working your way back towards the shallow end clipping...
in the liner about every 10’. Do this until you reach the shallow end corners, clip them in as well. Now go back and clip in the liner all the way around the pool, making sure it is pushed in all the way. Next tape up the backside of all the wall fittings and skimmer and the end of the main drainpipe. Cut a large piece of the wall foam, place this over the top of the step from side to side and over the front of the liner – tape this down. Tape up your skimmer where the vacuum hose went through. You can now turn on the shop vacuum or liner vacuum and within about 10 minutes the liner should be sucked in all over. This is how it will look with water in it, so if there are any wrinkles in the liner, now is the time to get them out. Note: if the liner corners are too tight in the shallow end, put some sand bags in the corners and a few in front of the steps to weight this area. Once the liner is wrinkle free you are ready to add water to the pool. Start adding water and let it fill a few inches into the deep end and shut the water off.

Cutting in the main Drain (Photo’s 17A and 17B):
Put all the tools you will need, screw driver, awl, and utility knife in the liner box and use it to slide down the slope. This is so that if you start to fall as you walk down the slope none of the tools will be able to puncture the liner. The main drain and screw holes will be visible, as the water pressure will make them indented. You already have a gasket under the liner. Using your awl, put your awl through the liner on 2 opposite holes. Put your gasket and faceplate on and put 2 screws in, then snug them up – then complete the rest. Once they are all in, now you can trim out the liner from inside the drain and place the cover plate on both drains. Start filling with water again. Keep the vacuum running until the water gets a few inches deep in the shallow end then carefully remove the vacuum hose. Fill water up to just right under the first step. Now it is time to cut in the step.

Cutting in the Steps (Photo’s 18A, 18B, 18C, 18D, 18E, 18F, 18G and 18H):
Have someone stand on the steps behind the liner. Starting on one side, pull the liner up so that the pattern is straight and does not dip down. Put the side faceplate against the liner and place top screw in. Skip down 5 or 6 holes and install another screw, repeat down until you get near the bottom step – you need to make sure that the last hole has a screw in it. You can now go back and fill in all the screws that you just skipped prior. Switch over to the other side of steps and repeat this same procedure. Starting at the bottom strip at the first hole, have someone hold up the other end and install the same way you did the sides, skipping holes but making sure that you have a screw in each end. Then go back and finish installing all the screws just like on the opposite side. After all the screws are in, trim out the inside of the liner (keep this extra material just in case you ever need some to patch with at a later date), then slip the cover plates on the steps.
*Alert * Note: DO NOT Install any faceplates or steps until water is right below that level.

When the water level reaches the return fitting, install the faceplate as shown in photo. (Or see manufacturer’s instructions for more details)

After the faceplate is fastened in place, cut out the liner material in the center, using a small blade.
Cutting in the Light:
Start filling again when you get right below the light. You will now install the gasket and faceplate as well as the wet niche light. You will have ¾” or 1” PVC conduit from the niche to a junctions box or all the way back to filter or where ever you select to connect your electrical. The conduit must be stubbed up 12” above the pool deck level, as there will be water in it. The following must be grounded: light, wall panels, ladder, handrails, socket’s, slide legs, filter, motor, heater, etc. See your local building department for regulations in your area. Fill water to under returns and install as you did the light. Proceed to under skimmer and cut the same way.

16. Installing your Plumbing Lines:
Put a few inches of backfill material around the pool so lines will not be on any cement. We recommend and send you flexible PVC (Kanaflex). Using this pipe you simply clean the pipe and the fitting it is going into, then put on the glue – push in and twist ¼ turn. Hold for a moment and you are done. These lines should all, including the main drain line, go back to the filter individually. The main drain and skimmer go to the Jandy ball valve on the pump. If you have step jets for the step, you must cut holes in the steps with a hole saw. Put in the jet bodies and T them together behind the center of the step. Then run that line back to the filter. That will give both jets equal pressure as the air valve comes up from the step jets to induce air into the jets. Returns and steps all get tied into the filter (Jandy valves). When plumbing is complete, if you can – it is recommended to start up the pump and filter to make sure you have no leaks before you backfill the pool.
17. Backfilling the Pool:

You want to backfill in stages. If the material you dug out is good material, you can use to backfill the pool. If not, you may have to bring in better material. You want to put in 1 foot at a time – then compact with a gas powered tamp. At the top 18” it is a good idea to use good gravel or something like it to be conducive to the pouring of a concrete deck over. When you reach the top of the wall, wet it all down - use a few water sprinklers on it, mud it up. If anything will settle, it will surely do it at this point. Your grade should pitch away from the pool ¼” per foot for a natural run off.

Note: By compacting in stages you will not have to wait to pour your concrete deck.

Your Pool Installation Is Now Complete!!