



"Where fun in the water is always in Season!"

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How to Open your Hot Tub /Spa

First of all, please realize that most damage that occurs to hot tub spas is caused by not properly winterizing or during times where the hot tub is not used frequently (either during the winter or during the summer). When it comes time to open up your hot tub, this is when these problems will become evident. While it is strongly recommended to have a pool or spa professional winterize and close up your spa if you won't be using it for the winter months, many spa owners can successfully tackle the job of spa opening, as it's much less risky than winterizing and closing.

Hot Tub Spa Opening Instructions

1. Remove the winter spa cover (or tarp) that is covering your hard thermal spa cover.

Clean and fold and store away. If you do not store your winter cover indoors, but instead keep it outside or in a shed, then you do not have to worry about getting the cover particularly spotlessly clean.

2. Remove the hard thermal cover.

Take a look inside the spa. Does everything seem OK? Some water or dirt can be expected. Hopefully, it is not half full of water. If it is, then put your submersible spa draining pump into the tub and pump out all the remaining water. Inspect the shell for cracks or splits. If there was water in the tub over the winter – and it froze, there's a chance that it could have caused serious damage to the spa shell. If your spa shell appears OK, then move on to the next step.

3. Clean the spa shell and the filter.

It is recommended to use an appropriate spa acrylic cleaner to clean your spa shell – such as Leisure Time Fast Gloss. Do not use soap based cleaners like GLASS PLUS, FANTASTIC, SCRUBBING BUBBLES, etc. These cleaners contain harsh abrasives that might scratch the acrylic spa shell as well the fact that they will leave a soap residue on the spa walls. When you refill the spa, you stand a chance of getting bubbly, soapy water! If spa surface is particularly dirty or has begun growing mildew, wipe this away with a clean damp sponge or cloth, then apply Fast Gloss to the spa shell's entire surface, walls, seats and floor, as directed. **Do not use any household wax or automobile wax on your spa.** Using

the wrong wax could cause troubles with your spa shell finish as well as cause problems with your water chemistry.

4. Clean or Replace Spa Filters

Use only an appropriate Spa Filter Cleaner such as Leisure Time Filter Clean to do this. Do not use a soap based cleaner on the filter

5. Clean your hard thermal spa cover.

Covers get a lot of abuse and most people do not care for them adequately, then they wonder why their cover only last for 2-3 years! A properly cared for spa cover usually lasts 5-7 years – even in outdoor conditions... Clean cover vinyl with appropriate spa cover cleaner such as Leisure Time Cover Care and Conditioner. When properly applied, this will significantly increase the life of your spa cover jacket. **It is not recommended to use ARMOR ALL as that product can prematurely dry out and age spa cover.** If your spa cover seems very heavy, the foams may have absorbed some water and it may be time to replace your spa cover.

6. Check out Spa Pack.

Now it is time to turn your attention towards the Spa Pack Equipment. If the spa was closed properly there should be a number of fittings in your spa pack that have been left unscrewed or open. You want to make sure these are all re-connected and tightened before you attempt to fill the spa with water. Also make sure any DRAIN PLUGS that were removed are properly re-inserted. Visually inspect the spa pump, filter container, valves and any plumbing pipes you can easily see in and around the equipment area. Does everything look OK? Do you see any obvious cracks or splits? The most common problems encountered at opening time are cracks in the wet end of the spa pump or in the filter container.

These cracks are usually caused by water freezing inside the components and then expanding and then cracking. Sometimes these are evident before you fill the spa with water, but sometimes they will not show up until the system is full and pressurized. If all looks OK, then simply tighten all quick disconnect fittings that may have been unscrewed. Check the front and top of the pump – in and out of the filter – in and out of the heater – and check to see that the air blower is still connected to its pipe as well. Make sure any drain valves are closed. Make sure that any SLICE VALVES are in the OPEN, or UP position to ensure adequate water flow to the system.

7. Fill the spa.

Take a deep breath and start to fill the spa. Put a garden hose as deep into the filter cavity as it will go turn your water on. This is the time when you should be the most attentive to this whole process (especially if your spa or any of the equipment are indoors and are in any area where a small flood could cause a problem!). As the tub starts to fill up – and the water gets up to various levels in the spa, the jet piping will slowly start to fill with water and the water will start to reach each piece of equipment in your equipment pack.

Keep an eye on everything as tub is filling. If you see any leak (or flood) anywhere, turn off the water until you have located and repaired the leak. The most common leak areas are around the pump and at all quick disconnect fittings by the spa pack. These drips or leaks can usually be fixed by tightening the fittings better. Sometimes you may need a new gasket or O-ring to stop the leak. In any event, make sure all leaks and drips are FIXED before you continue to fill the tub.

8. Power up spa.

Assuming that the filling procedure went well, you are now ready to power the tub up, and hopefully it will work! Make sure the spa pack area is dry and that you are not standing in any puddles of water when you first power up the tub. If possible, make sure the spa heater thermostat is turned ALL THE WAY DOWN, or to the OFF position before you turn on the tub. Now turn on the circuit breaker that controls the electric power to the tub. Go back to the spa pack and check the GFCI to make sure it TESTS and RESETS. Not all spa packs have a built in GFCI, but most of them do – and this is a very important safety device!!! You want to make sure that the GFCI and/or the main house CIRCUIT BREAKER that controls the electric to the spa are functioning properly. If the GFCI and/or BREAKER works proceed to the next step.

9. Start pushing buttons!

See if the spa pump goes from high to low speed. Does the air blower come on and off? Does the light come on? How about the booster-pump (if you have one)? ... If all things seem to be working well, then turn the heater on and turn up the thermostat. DO NOT TURN THE HEATER ON UNTIL YOU ARE 100% SURE YOU HAVE WATER FLOW THRU YOUR PIPES. You could burn out your heater if you turn it on before you have adequate water flow. If you are getting good flow through the jets, then turn on the heater and heat the tub to the temperature you desire. If you are not getting good flow thru your jets, or the pump does not seem to be running well – or not priming – you could have a number of different problems. The one VERY COMMON problem that many people have at their spa opening is that the pipes become air bound and you get what's called an "air lock" in your system that causes the jets to seem to not be working properly, or maybe not at all. Your symptoms may be that the pump goes on and off OK, but no water (or very little water) is coming out of the jets. What is happening? ... This is how an air lock can happen... If you are filling the tub up fairly rapidly, air can get trapped in the pipes that go to the suction fittings and the jets. The water level rises up past the openings in the spa. The air becomes trapped (locked) in the pipes and when you go to start up the spa pump, it tries to suck in water, but only air is in the pipes. The pump can't prime itself. The way to fix this is to loosen the quick disconnect fitting in front of the pump. This will allow some air to get in and should break the "air lock" seal that has developed. You should hear a hissssss noise and then see some water start to come out of the pump fitting. Once you see the water start to come out, simply re-tighten the fitting. Turn the pump on. It will surge for a few seconds, but then it should pick up the prime and start to pump properly. If it does not, you should repeat this procedure again. If it still does not work, you could have some other problems. At that point give us a call to schedule a time to check it out for you.

10. Adjust water chemistry.

Once the tub is filled, running, and heating – then you will have to set up the water chemistry. See our Recommended Hot Tub Routine for your size/gallon hot tub.

Now Enjoy Your Spa! 😊