



Keeping your Blue Ridge Koi and Goldfish healthy starts with a healthy pond environment. In addition to daily, weekly, and monthly pond maintenance tasks, certain chores need to be performed seasonally.

## Basic Pond Maintenance

Setting aside a bit of time each week to tend to your pond will help keep your koi healthy and your pond ecosystem in good shape.

### Routine tasks:

- Remove debris, leaves, and uneaten food from your pond daily.
- Perform 10% water changes weekly.\*
- Clean skimmer basket weekly.
- Clean filtration system weekly.\*
- Test water 1-2 times a week.\*

\*Not necessary when temperatures are consistently below 45°F

## Fall Maintenance

Fall maintenance is all about preparing your pond and your fish for the colder winter months. Autumn tends to bring excess leaves and foliage debris, which must be removed to maintain healthy water parameters so that your fish stay strong and healthy through the winter months.

### Fall tasks:

- Install a net over your pond to prevent leaves and debris from entering.
- Trim back foliage that hangs over your pond.
- Scoop out any floating debris with a skimmer net.
- Remove any sludge that has accumulated, either manually using a net and gloves or with a pond vacuum.
- Turn off any waterfalls or fountains once temperatures drop below 40°F.

## Winter Maintenance

Winterizing your pond will look different depending on your climate. In areas where the temperature stays between 50°F-65°F, you can care for your pond and your koi as you would in the fall. In colder climates, you can shut down your pond completely and move your koi indoors, though most hobbyists opt to leave their fish in the pond through winter-which is completely safe.

### Winter tasks:

- Winterize or remove your pond pump and filter and store indoors for the winter (if choosing to shut down your pond).
- Add an aerator to help improve oxygen levels.
- Keep fountains and waterfalls off if temperatures are below 40°F and drain plumbing to prevent freezing.
- Ensure your pond never freezes completely over, as this can be lethal to your fish. Sometimes, an aerator is enough to prevent this. In frigid climates, it may be necessary to add a de-icer to your pond.

## Spring Maintenance

Spring is most hobbyists' favorite time of year. Once your pond is free from ice and the water temperatures are consistently above 50°F, you can begin bringing your pond back to life. Spring cleaning helps ensure that your pond and fish thrive through the warmer months.

### Spring tasks:

- Remove any de-icer and heaters.
- Set up and switch on your pond pump and filter.
- Monitor water parameters. Perform a 20% water change.
- Turn on waterfalls and fountains.
- Add pond salt. Maintaining .3-.4% salinity during this time can help prevent parasitic infestations.
- Watch for signs of illness, as the immune systems of koi are more vulnerable in early spring.
- Remove any debris and leaves. As the temperatures warm, they will decay more quickly and negatively impact water quality.
- Algae blooms are common in the spring. You can install a UV clarifier to help combat this.

## Summer Maintenance

Summer is when your koi are most active, which means your pond will require more maintenance. The increase in waste paired with warmer temperatures means water parameters can quickly become an issue. Maintaining water quality is key to a successful summer pond season.

### Summer tasks:

- Test water twice a week.
- Perform a 10-20% water change once a week.
- Monitor dissolved oxygen levels, as levels are typically lower in warmer temperatures. Consider adding an additional aeration device to help improve oxygen.
- Provide ample shade for your pond. This will help protect koi from sunburn and prevent water temperatures from becoming too hot.
- Clean and flush filters once a week.