



HOW TO BUY A HOT TUB THE RIGHT WAY



TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARD OWNING A SPA

Choosing the right hot tub for you and your family can be overwhelming and confusing with the various products, brands, options and features that are available to you. Our goal is to take the stress out of buying a hot tub. We have put together a list of questions you should ask before you purchase a hot tub from us or any other dealer. We are hopeful that this information will help you during your search.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

Since a hot tub purchase is not an everyday type of purchase, there are a few things we suggest you do before you even start the shopping process. You'll need to consider your lifestyle, budget, placement, time required to maintain and even environmental issues.

To start, let's clarify a few of the common terms people use to describe a hot tub. They include; spas, portable spas, hot tub spa and portable hot tub - all describe the same thing, so don't get too caught up in the terminology. The terms hot tub and spa are used interchangeably throughout this report.

There are various types of hot tubs and spas on the market today and they come in a wide variety of shapes, styles and sizes. The medical and relaxation benefits of hot water therapy are the same regardless of the hot tub you select, but selecting the right hot tub from a reputable dealer can save you time and money in terms of longevity and maintenance.

Let's review some of the things you need to know and some questions you need to ask yourself before you invest in your own hot tub.



QUESTION #1

WILL THE SPA BE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE?

The thrill of having your own personal spa can distract you from asking the tough questions that will optimize the experience of being a spa owner. All the choices can be overwhelming, so it's important to educate yourself about the important considerations involved in purchasing a hot tub.

Here are a few questions to ask before you invest your hard-earned money. These questions will help you focus in on what is important to know about hot tubs so that you can buy one that is not only thrilling for your senses but also practical for your life.

Different types of spas have different requirements, but there is one fundamental question that every spa owner must ask first: is your spa going indoors or outdoors?

And regardless of where the spa will go, you may want to consider additional accessories to protect your spa from the environment and/or make your spa private. Here are a few things to consider when your hot tub is going outside:

A SPA COVER

You definitely need a cover. It keeps the heat in and children out. So it saves you money in terms of monthly heating costs and adds a necessary safety element. Consider purchasing the locking type covers, the added costs of which are nominal. Ask your dealer about this.

If your spa is going to be outside, your spa cover keeps leaves and debris from littering your spa which means less maintenance. We suggest that you purchase the best spa cover you can afford as an inferior one soon causes problems.



A GAZEBO OR SPA ENCLOSURE

Not only do these attractive enclosures create a welcoming scene, but they can cover or surround your hot tub and provide privacy in a variety of ways. They come in a pavilion style, which is almost similar to a shed with a roof, and open air gazebos, which are roofless and allow fresh air to circulate. If you want to see the sky at night, you will likely go with an open-air type of enclosure.



ENHANCED LANDSCAPING

If your spa will be outdoors, it might be best to seriously consider adding more shrubs and trees to provide privacy. For instance planting leafy trees around your property will restrict the view from the outside.

IF YOUR SPA IS GOING INDOORS, YOU HAVE A HOST OF OTHER CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS:

- 1) Do you have enough space for a hot tub or will you build a room?
Have you measured properly?
- 2) Do you have the proper ventilation for steam to escape?
- 3) Can the floor withstand the weight of a hot tub full of water?

You might need to consider hiring a contractor to give professional advice about whether you meet any required standards.

QUESTION #2

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL BE USING THE SPA ON A REGULAR BASIS?

This is a very personal thing to consider. If you live alone and plan to be the only one who uses the spa, clearly you can enjoy one of a smaller size. However, if you plan on having parties and inviting a group of friends into the hot tub with you, you're going to need one that accommodates more people. Ask the dealer you speak with to advise how large of a spa will be adequate for your needs.

Not only do you have to think about the size of your spa, you also need to think about the location of your spa in relation to your house. For instance: if you plan on having parties that involve your spa, you might want to put the spa a little further from your home.

You might also need to accessorize your tub, perhaps with a deck, and change your landscaping a little bit to accommodate a hot tub that will have a lot of guests.



QUESTION #3

HOW OFTEN WILL YOU SOAK IN YOUR HOT TUB?

Many people soak 4-5 times per week and usually before going to sleep. Your situation may be different and may even change over time, but just like any one of your other possessions (cars, boats, etc.), the more you use your hot tub, the more you will have to maintain it. The more you use your hot tub, the more you will clean it and the more you will need water care products to keep your water fresh and clean. If you use your hot tub often, your electric costs will be higher. Factor that into your spa decisions. Be aware of the total cost of your personal spa as much as possible before you purchase it.



QUESTION #4

WHAT WILL YOU USE YOUR SPA FOR?

Many people choose a hot tub for recreational reasons: they love the idea of lounging in the warm water. But some purchase a spa for therapeutic purposes. Perhaps they've heard that a spa is effective in decreasing their arthritis symptoms, or they've read that a hot tub can increase circulation, all of which is true.



Different spas can target different needs. For example, if you plan to use the spa for back pain, placement and strength of jets will prove to be very important and you'll want to ensure that you choose a spa with jets that will soothe your achy body where it needs soothing.

QUESTION #5

HOW MUCH WILL MY POWER BILLS INCREASE?



This is an often overlooked question, which is interesting considering that ultimately it becomes one of the most important considerations throughout the life of your hot tub. You may be dazzled by the hot tub with all the bells and whistles, but remember that this translates into money the spa will cost you, the cost of repairs you might need and one thing more: the amount due on your next electric bill.

The good news is that it's not as expensive to maintain a hot tub as you might think: usually a dollar or so a day. Finding out how much your hot tub will cost you to operate is not as difficult as it might immediately seem. What's involved? The temperature of the water and the surrounding air; how often you use your spa; hot tub size and type; and, the cost of your local electricity.

Most manufacturers and some dealers can provide you with an energy table. This small table can usually give you a good estimate of how much you will end up paying, taking into account things like watts used and temperature. These tables are best used if you have access to the accurate rate your electric company charges.

USEFUL TIPS: KEEPING PERSONAL SPA COSTS DOWN

Insulation - Usually if a hot tub has more insulation, the cost of operation will be lower. Ask your dealer about layers of closed cell polyurethane, which provides the best insulation. A spa cover will also help.

Energy Efficiency - Hot tubs that are energy efficient are less expensive to run. They are environmentally conscious and use less energy which is why they are cheaper to operate overall. Make sure to buy from a dealer who offers hot tubs with the ENERGY SMART label.

QUESTION #6

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BEFORE DELIVERY?

Above all, make sure that you meet the electrical requirements of your hot tub before it arrives. You also want to make sure that the delivery experts can access the site easily. Your dealer will be more than happy to send a consultant to help you do this, in most cases.

If you're going to have an indoor spa and you've chosen a room for it, the space has to be cleaned out entirely. Double check that you've chosen a room with floor and wall surfaces that repel moisture and has adequate ventilation.

If you're placing the spa outside, preparation should be much easier. All you need to do is make sure you have a level space, electrical access and water. But if you are thinking ahead and want to make wise choices that will ensure that your hot tub has a great life, you might consider a few other things:

Are there power lines or tree branches above where you want the tub to go? You'll want to make sure the spot you've chosen is one you're happy with, but you'll also need to make sure that you will be safe when you're soaking.

Make sure the surface under the tub stays level. If you want to get creative, using paver stones, rocks and concrete can be a permanent solution — but keep in mind that the more creative you get, the more likely you may need local variances and to comply with code. If you want to be simple, a spa pad may be all you need.

If you've chosen to build a deck, consider calling a professional to make sure that your deck can handle a full tub. It's one thing to put an empty spa on your property but you will eventually fill it and you want to be sure that won't cause any problems.



QUESTION #7

WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE SHOULD YOU EXPECT FROM THE DEALER AND THE MANUFACTURER?

All hot tub manufacturers and hot tub dealers are not the same. This usually becomes painfully obvious the first time you have a problem. Doing a little research on the dealer and manufacturer before you make an investment in a spa is the best way to make sure that you avoid headaches and stress once you finally get the hot tub home.

The most crucial piece of information when choosing a hot tub dealer is the length of time they've been in business. Why? Because a company that has been in business for over 40 years knows how to satisfy customers, or else they would have been out of business years ago. Also, dealers who have extensive experience with hot tubs know the industry inside and out. They carry better products, offer better service and can solve problems knowledgeably and quickly.

If available, check out testimonials from satisfied customers. Check online reviews, third party recognition and awards. Consult the Better Business Bureau to see if there have been any complaints. Do all due diligence in choosing a dealer from which to buy.

You'll also want to inquire about how long a manufacturer has been in business. There is nothing more frustrating than needing a part that is no longer manufactured or hard to find because the company is no longer in business. Choose a manufacturer who is still thriving.



Once you're satisfied that you've chosen a quality manufacturer and an experienced dealer, the next task is to inquire about service. Many people don't give enough consideration to service when purchasing a new item like a hot tub— often until it's too late.

A personal spa can be a costly investment. If you have a problem or need a repair, you will want a resolution right away. Make sure that the dealer has a full time service staff. Even better is a dealer who hires certified professionals who have a superior understanding of your particular hot tub.

Next, check out a dealer's service department and ask the following questions:

- What are their service hours?
- What kind of maintenance services do they provide, such as winterization and monthly cleaning?
- How is their stock of replacement parts and how long does it take for them to get parts?
- Do they offer moving services if you should move to another home?
- What about trade-in services in case you ever decide to upgrade to a more deluxe model?



Buying a hot tub can be deceptively simple, especially if you can't wait to have a long soak. By keeping these questions in mind, you put yourself in a great position to logically consider the choices available to you.

You'll be able to choose a hot tub based on your emotions, but also based on considerations that will become important as life with your personal spa begins. Take your time and choose wisely; you'll find that investing in a hot tub is one of the best decisions you can make.

WANT TO LEARN EVEN MORE?

Please feel free to stop by our convenient Spa and Sauna Company locations and talk with one of our factory trained spa consultants so that we can show you in person some of what was just discussed. We look forward to seeing you soon!



The Spa and Sauna Shop
250 E. Glendale Ave.
Sparks, NV 89436
775-852-3838

Hot Spring Spas of Santa Cruz
707 River St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831-425-7727

The Spa and Billiards Shop
9748 S. Virginia St.
Reno, NV 89511
775-852-3838

Hot Spring Spas of San Jose
2627 S. Bascom Ave.
Cambell, CA 95008
408-996-9693

Reno Hot Spring Spas
6815 Sierra Center Pkwy.
Reno, NV 89511
775-851-7727