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Of the most tranquil features you can add to your pool is a waterfall. With rushing water sounds and visuals, this pool water feature recreates the zen ambience that natural waterfalls give off. Whether you're building from the ground up or adding on to an existing pool, the inclusion of a waterfall will be a defining feature of your backyard. Pool waterfalls come in various forms, but their design principle is the same. Waterfalls relocate water from a high level to a low level, with the water emptying into your pool. As they require power, it's recommended that they have a dedicated pump. This ensures water can be piped to the top of the waterfall, and no issues flow will arise. Traditional pool waterfalls are built out of stones and boulders for an all-natural look and feel. In some cases, synthetic materials are used in place of the real thing. This is usually a budget-friendly method as artificial stone waterfalls have several upsides: They're cheaper/They're lightweight (no extra deck support needed/They're pre-molded/pre-assembled for fast installation (less labor costs) Waterfalls can be crafted to pretty much any design you'd like. You can have a single stream, multiple streams converging, or even multiple waterfalls designed around your pool. Placement is usually in an area of the pool which is relatively shallow. This allows swimmers to stand underneath so that the water can rain down on them. Sure, waterfalls seem like the perfect pool feature. But are there any downsides to installing them? Here's what you should consider: Aside from the obvious aesthetic advantages, the sound of the waterfall can insulate you from outside noise (such as the pump) providing a therapeutic aspect. They also keep the water in your pool circulating constantly. This helps to maintain the balance of the water's chemical makeup, and also assists in moving water through the filtration system. Waterfalls also cool the pool's water. Swimming in cooler water is advantageous so that your body doesn't overheat (which can cause muscle spasms). Cooler water also helps protect the pool's chlorine. Chlorine is naturally broken down over time by sunlight. A cooler temperature gives chlorine a longer lifespan, in turn, saving you money. Waterfalls can be a costly feature as they require their own pump, plumbing, and extra installation time. They can also be quite noisy (which may be good or bad depending on your neighbours). Additionally, calcium and mineral deposits can build up on the rocks and make their way into the pool's water, upsetting the pH balance. If the waterfall is made from faux rocks, chemicals in the water can eat away at the facade, and it will eventually need replacement. The cost of adding a waterfall depends on size and materials, but an entry level ballpark figure would be between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Some extravagant waterfall systems can cost upwards of \$30,000. It really depends on how big you're looking to go. Of course, the bigger the waterfall, the longer it will take to install, and the higher the labor fees. As for operational costs, due to their dependence on electricity and a separate pump (per waterfall), you'll likely incur a higher electric bill. For this reason we suggest investing in an energy efficient pump, which may cost more upfront, but will pay off in the long run. One of the most exciting parts of adding a waterfall to your pool is designing it. Thankfully, there's many ways you can customize your waterfall to be unique while still suiting your style. The most popular waterfall designs are: Natural Rock Weeping WallWater WallSheer DescentGroto Let's look at some real examples: Image by Exterior Worlds This is an elaborately designed natural rock look, implementing multiple cascading waterfalls for a look of true serenity. It's hard to tell from the photo, but it could actually be one flow of water at the top being redirected to hit all the waterfall points simultaneously. If not, there are multiple points on this structure where water is pumped in to create the falls. Whatever the technique, it's easy to want to add something in this vein to your backyard. Image by Watts Pool Company Some natural waterfalls in colder areas of the world are the result of melted snow making its way down huge cliffs and rock faces. These are known as weeping wall waterfalls. You can recreate this calming trickle of water in your own backyard. 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