

Don't Get Soaked with the Wrong Spa

How to Buy a Hot Tub

Buying a spa is a decision you shouldn't feel rushed or pressured into, so be sure to ask the dealer a lot of questions. Like shopping for anything else, knowledge is everything. Before you take the plunge into buying a spa, ask for a private "test soak" so you can feel the jets and the overall comfort of the spa. Here is a checklist of things to consider. Feel free to print it out and take it with you when you comparison shop.

1. Learn about the spa's specific features, ease of use and maintenance.

- When the spa is not in use, does the water always remain hot and clean?
- Do the [jets and jet systems](#) allow you to customize your [hydromassage experience](#)?
- Does the spa offer a [variety of jets](#) which are designed to specifically target certain areas of the body?
- How loud are the jets and [pump](#)?
- Does the spa offer a [balanced filtration system](#)? Is the water continuously filtered 24 hours a day to ensure clean, clear water?
- Are the filters top-loaded for easy access?
- Is the heating and [filtration system](#) fully automatic with no programming required?
- Is there an automatic clean-up cycle after you exit the spa?
- Inquire about the [heater](#)—typically the most vulnerable component of any spa. Make sure corrosion will not occur.
- Are the [controls](#) user-friendly, easy to operate and adjust?
- Are there multiple [water care system options](#), including an [automated water care system](#)?
- Are there [optional features](#) to make spa ownership easier?
- Does the spa include a [tranquil water feature](#)? Does it include a "tranquil mode?"
- Is the [underwater light](#) extra large? Does it illuminate the entire body of water and is it dimmable?
- Is [multi-colored lighting](#) an available option? Is it energy efficient?
- Is a [music system](#) available? Is it designed specifically for the spa environment? Are the speakers visible?
- Can the spa's electronic functions be operated via a [radio-frequency remote control](#)?
- Are there a [variety of cover removal systems](#) available? Do they support a variety of installation applications and price points?
- What are the electrical specifications of the spa? [Are both 115v and 230v available?](#)
- How is the [seating configured](#)? Are you able to move about easily? Is there lumbar support for your back?

2. Learn how the spa was constructed and its energy efficiency.

- The [components](#) should be fully tested and backed by the manufacturer's warranty.
- Make sure the spa is [totally insulated](#), not just fully-foamed.
- Ask how to estimate your [monthly operation costs](#). (Beware of less expensive spas which can cost in excess of \$50 per month to operate).
- Are the estimated [monthly spa operating costs](#) based on documented, un-biased, third-party testing?

3. Obtain a copy of the warranty.

- Ask for a copy of the [warranty](#) and read it thoroughly. Beware of the dealer who is reluctant to provide a copy.
- What spa parts are covered under warranty and for how long? Make sure the heater, surface/structure, components, tile and skirt are included.
- How does the manufacturer's warranty compare with other brands? Make sure there are no undesirable limitations or exclusions.

4. Obtain information on the manufacturer and the dealer to ensure they are reputable, and that you will receive quality service both during and after your spa purchase.

- Is the manufacturer and [ISO 9001:2000 certified](#)?
- Has the manufacturer received any awards of excellence by the National Pool and Spa Institute or other professional trade organizations?
- Have any the spa manufacturer's models received a [Consumers Digest Best Buy award](#)?
- How long has the [manufacturer](#) been in business?
- How long has the [dealer](#) been in business? Inquire about their service policy.
- Call the Better Business Bureau for more information.
- Ask for customer references.

For more information, or if you have technical or customer service questions, please e-mail us at custsvc@hotspring.com.

For complete Pre-Delivery Instructions, exciting installation ideas, spa renderings, and lots of other great information, visit our new [Backyard Planning](#) section of the site.