

Pool Planting

On a baking hot summer's day, there's one thing more inviting than a beautiful swimming pool - a beautifully landscaped swimming pool! Cooling off in deep water feels all the more luxurious when you're surrounded by gorgeous greenery.

Whether your style is tropical rainforest or formal minimalist, the trick to pool planting is choosing plants that give the desired effect without creating maintenance headaches or safety hazards.



Plant mainly foliage for a serene and tranquil setting. Dark green reduces glare, while bold foliage plants impart a lush tropical effect and create less litter than small leaf plants. Palms are ideal because they provide height and light shade, and are relatively litter free. Avoid planting large trees close to a pool. They can wreak havoc on pools with their roots. If existing nearby trees are causing a litter problem, a pool cover may be the answer.

Add colour accent with flowers.

Heavy flowering and fruiting plants can cause litter problems, but a few pots of flowering begonias, geraniums or petunias, will liven the scene for summer. Hibiscus, cannas and vireya rhododendrons make useful accent plants in a subtropical setting, and their larger flowers are easy to clean up. White flowers will glow in the moonlight on summer evenings. For summer perfume plant gardenias, frangipani, star jasmine, heliotrope, lilies or citrus.

Slope gardens away from the pool

to minimise litter problems. Alternatively, loose soil and mulch can be confined behind low retaining walls or in planter boxes.

Lawn areas soften glare and are lovely to lie on, but they need to be mown with a catcher attached. For easier maintenance, combine paved areas with carpet forming plants, such as meuhlenbeckia, coprosma or mondo grass.

Avoid hazards. Dramatic yuccas, aloes and agaves can look spectacular around pools but they must be planted away from main traffic areas. Plants that attract bees, and those with poisonous parts are also worth giving a miss, especially where there are children.

Fencing, because the law demands it, has a major influence on pool planting design. While planting is a great way to soften fence lines, and improve shelter and privacy, anything climbable must be on the inside of the fencing, or at least 1.2 m away from the fence with no overhanging branches. Check with your local council as each may have slightly different rules.

Recommended plants for swimming pool enclosures

Tropical style (warm climate)

Trees

- Palms
- Ensete (banana palms)
- Hymenosporum (Australian frangipani)
- Meryta sinclarii (puka)
- Tree ferns
- Schefflera (umbrella tree)

Shrubs

- Aucuba
- Gardenia
- Hibiscus
- Metrosideros 'Tahiti'
- Monstera deliciosa (fruit salad plant)
- Philodendron
- Plumeria (tropical frangipani)
- Strelitzia (bird of paradise)
- Vireya Rhododendron

Accent

- Aloe
- Agave
- Alocasia
- Bromeliads
- Canna
- Cordyline
- Yucca

Ground Cover

- Clivia miniata
- Ferns
- Iresine
- Liriope
- Ophiopogon (mondo grass)
- Scleranthus
- Succulents

Climbers

- Bougainvillea
- Beaumontia grandiflora
- Campsis grandiflora (trumpet vine)
- Stephanotis floribunda
- Tecomanthe speciosa
- Thunbergia grandiflora (sky flower)
- Trachelospermum (star Jasmine)

Mediterranean style (dry climate)

Trees

- Palms
- Citrus
- Laurus nobilis (bay tree)
- Lagerstroemia (crepe myrtle)
- Olives

Shrubs

- Ceanothus
- Leucadendron
- Raphiolepis
- Rosemary
- Viburnum

Accent

- Aloe
- Agave
- Yucca
- Thuja
- Cupressus (cypress)
- Juniperus (juniper)

Ground Cover

- Agapanthus
- Hemerocallis (day lily)
- Ophiopogon (mondo grass)
- Succulents

Climbers

- Bougainvillea
- Dipladenia
- Ficus pumila
- Hardenbergia
- Hedera (ivy)
- Mandevilla laxa (Chilean jasmine)
- Pandorea jasminoides
- Parthenocissus quinquefolia (Virginia creeper)
- Trachelospermum (star jasmine)

New Zealand Natives

Medium -Tall

- Griselinia
- Meryta sinclarii (puka)
- Nikau palm
- Pseudopanax
- Tree ferns

Accent

- Astelia
- Myosotidium (Chatham Island forget-me-not)
- Phormium (flax)
- Libertia
- Xeronema (Poor Knight's lily)

Groundcover

- Acaena 'Purpurea'
- Coprosma
- Ground ferns
- Leptinella minor
- Festuca coxii (blue grass)
- Geranium 'Pink Spice'
- Pachystegia (Marlborough rock daisy)
- Scleranthus

Climber

- Tecomanthe speciosa

Libertia



Bougainvillea



Moonlight Puka



Clivia



Sky Flower



Hemerocallis Green Flutter

