

Solar Blankets / Solar Pool Covers

Use and Care of Your Solar Blanket

Solar blankets serve a very useful role. Retaining heat; preventing heat loss - is the most important one. A solar blanket will also help raise the water temperature a certain amount, but if you are expecting a solar blanket to heat your pool to 90 degrees in March or September, you will be disappointed. You can, however, expect a modest temperature increase with your solar blanket. The following are tips and ideas that will prolong the life of your solar blanket and make the most of your solar blanket experience.

Buying Your Solar Blanket

When you measure your pool for your new **solar cover**, measure the longest and widest points of the pool. Include steps and loveseats. When you get your solar blanket, it will be a large rectangle. If possible, lay it over the pool, bubble side down and leave it for a day or two before trimming it. This will allow the blanket to “open” a bit and allowing packing wrinkles to fade, giving a better end result.

Trimming Your Solar Blanket

After your solar blanket has come out of the box, and has laid over the pool for a day or two, it is time to trim it. Use a sharp pair of scissors or a razor knife. The idea is to have the blanket fit edge to edge, end to end. Cut the **solar blanket** all the way around the pool; be sure to cut the corners to the proper radius.

I like to use the edge of the coping stone as a guide for my razor knife. This also ends up with a blanket that will curl up on the edge of the tile. This keeps the pool cleaner than a solar pool cover that does not quite cover from edge to edge, but has gaps on the sides.

Storing Your Solar Blanket

The best way to store your solar blanket is with a roller, or a **solar blanket reel**. The solar blanket is attached to the roller with straps, and is rolled up when the blanket is not in use. Most rollers have wheels that can be used to store the cover and reel when it's party time or when you just don't want it around. However, you do not **need** a solar blanket reel. Most solar covers come with a large white bag for storage. You can just pull the solar blanket off of the pool, fold it and put it in the shed or garage. When storing your solar cover for the winter, use a swimming pool cover cleaner and deodorizer. Do not leave the solar cover out in the weather during the winter unless it is on the pool, in use.

Cleaning Your Solar Blanket Cover

The best way to clean your solar blanket is to use a **solar cover cleaner** and disinfectant.

Wet the solar blanket and use your telescoping pole and your pool brush. Squirt the solar blanket cleaner on the cover and scrub. You can do this with the cover right on the pool if you want to. When you are done, grab the hose and spray the dirty water into the skimmer opening. It may be easier to remove the solar cover from the pool and spread it out on the lawn (but not right after mowing)! If you have a slope you can spread it on, this will make rinsing easier. For a quick cleaning, you can just hose off the solar cover while it is on the pool. Hose the debris right into the skimmer opening or into the corner and use your leaf net to remove the debris.

Getting the Most Out Of Your Solar Pool Cover

You can increase the life of your solar blanket by following a few simple rules. Never leave your solar blanket outside when the pool is winterized. Make sure you keep a chemically balanced swimming pool. Remove the solar cover when you shock the pool, and leave it off for 2-3 days after any chemical treatment. Use a **cover cleaner** and deodorizer on a regular basis. When stored on a solar blanket reel, use a solar blanket cover to protect it from the sun. Humorous, I know – that the sun can harm a solar blanket, but next to very low pH or high chlorine, UV rays can cause a solar blanket to lose much of its flexibility, and it will quickly become brittle.

When Is It Time to Replace My Solar Blanket?

Your **solar cover** will not last forever. The plastic will begin to deteriorate after time. When the solar blanket begins to flake and get brittle, it's time to replace. The first sign of the end of your solar blanket is when the bubbles on the underside begin to fall off. Then you can use it to cover the firewood pile! The material is recyclable, so when buying a solar cover replacement, please consider the environment when disposing of the old solar pool cover. Most solar blankets have short lives, maybe 5 years would be considered a long lifespan.