



## The Essential Chemicals Every Aussie Pool Owner Should Know

Keeping your swimming pool in top nick isn't just about scooping out a few leaves. The real magic happens in the water chemistry — and understanding the basic chemicals you use week-to-week makes all the difference. Here's a straightforward rundown of the key products, what they do, and why they matter.

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### Chlorine (Sanitiser)

Chlorine is the backbone of clean pool water. It kills off bacteria, algae, and anything else that shouldn't be floating around. Whether you use liquid, tablets, or saltwater chlorination, maintaining the right chlorine level is vital for safe and healthy swimming. Without it, the pool goes green, smells funky, and becomes a germ farm.

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### pH Up (Sodium Carbonate)

pH is simply how acidic or alkaline your pool water is. When it drops too low, the water becomes corrosive and can sting eyes and skin. pH Up lifts the pH level and keeps things comfortable for swimmers. It also helps protect equipment and improves chlorine efficiency.

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### pH Down (Hydrochloric Acid or Sodium Bisulphate)

If the pH climbs too high, the water becomes cloudy, scale forms, and chlorine loses its punch. pH Down brings it back into the ideal range. In Australia, liquid acid is the most common choice — strong stuff but essential for balanced water.

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### Total Alkalinity Increaser (Bicarbonate)

Alkalinity acts like a buffer, stopping your pH from bouncing around. If it's too low, your pH will swing like a yo-yo and your pool becomes hard to manage. Bicarb lifts alkalinity, stabilises your chemistry, and helps prevent corrosion and staining.

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### Calcium Hardness Increaser (Calcium Chloride)

Calcium gives your water the "hardness" needed to protect pool surfaces. Too little and the water becomes hungry — it'll start eating your plaster, grout, or equipment. Too much and you'll get scale. Adding calcium only when needed keeps surfaces safe and long-lasting.

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## **Cyanuric Acid (Stabiliser)**

CYA is sunscreen for chlorine. It protects it from burning off in the Aussie sun. Almost all outdoor pools need stabiliser, but too much will “lock up” your chlorine and stop it from working. Knowing your CYA level is crucial, especially in salt pools.

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## **Salt (for Saltwater Pools)**

Saltwater chlorinators convert salt into chlorine through electrolysis. Keeping the correct salt level ensures the chlorinator works properly. Too low and you’ll get low chlorine warnings; too high and you risk equipment damage. Use only pool-grade salt.

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## **Algaecide**

Algaecide helps prevent algae before it gets a foothold. It’s not a replacement for chlorine but a handy backup, especially in warmer months or if your pool gets lots of sun. Copper-based algaecides are strong but can stain if overdosed; polymer types are gentler.

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## **Clarifiers & Flocculants**

Clarifiers bind tiny particles together so your filter can catch them. Floc works faster but drops everything to the bottom for vacuuming. These aren’t weekly chemicals — more of a “get out of jail” option when the pool goes cloudy.

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## **Metal Removers & Stain Preventers**

If you’re topping up with bore or tank water, metals like iron and copper can sneak in and stain your surfaces. Metal removers “hold” these nasties in solution so your filter can deal with them.

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## **Shock (Oxidiser)**

Shocking gives your pool a big boost of sanitising power. It burns off organics, removes odours, and resets your chlorine when things get messy after storms, parties, or hot weather.