Creating an Outdoor Swimming Pool

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The information in this article applies to:

PRO Architectural Suite Landscape

QUESTION

I would like to create a ground level swimming pool in the back yard of my plan. How can I do this?
ANSWER

Using the Terrain Feature tools and furnishings and fixtures from the Library Browser, you can design and accessorize an in-ground swimming pool area.

To create a ground level swimming pool

1. Select **Terrain> Feature> Rectangular Feature** from the menu, then click and drag a rectangular shape in a flat area within your Terrain Perimeter. This feature will become your swimming pool.

   - If this option is not active in your menu, a Terrain Perimeter does not exist in the plan and needs to be created.

   - To create a Terrain Perimeter if one is not present, select **Terrain> Create Terrain Perimeter** from the menu.

Feature regions follow the contours of your terrain. If you place a feature region on a slope, it will follow the slope rather than form a flat area. If your terrain is sloped, use Elevation Lines or a Flat Region to create a level area to place your pool in.

2. Click the **Select Objects** tool, then click on the pool region to select it and use
the edit handles that display to resize it, reshape it, and move it into the desired position in your plan.

- Click the **Break Line** tool, then click on an edge to add a new corner, or pivot point, to the shape.

![Diagram of a shape with edit handles](image)

- Click on an edge, then click the **Change Line/Arc** edit button to change a straight line into an arc.

- Use the triangular edit handle that displays along an arc to change its radius.

![Diagram of a shape with edit handles](image)

3. When you are satisfied with the shape of the pool region, click the **Open Object** button.
edit button while the pool region is still selected. On the **GENERAL** panel of the **Terrain Feature Specification** dialog:

- Specify the desired depth of the pool in the **Height** field using a negative value.
- In this example, a **Height** of -36" is used.

4. On the **MATERIALS** panel of the **Terrain Feature Specification** dialog:

- Click on the second Terrain Feature in the list on the left, then click the **Select Material** button.

- In the **Select Library Object** dialog, browse the Materials library category to find a suitable material for the interior of your pool.

In this example, white tile from **Materials> Tile> Solid> Large Grout** is used; however, you can also select tile from the **DalTile** library or choose a different color or material.

- Click **OK** to close the dialog and apply your change.
5. Click **OK** once more to close the **Terrain Feature Specification** dialog.

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**To place a geometric shape to simulate water**

1. Select **View> Library Browser** from the menu to open the Library Browser. In Previous versions select Library> Library Browser to toggle the display of this feature.
   - Navigate to **Shapes> Boxes> Closed**.
   - Click once inside the pool region to place a box at that location. After editing, this box will form the surface of the water.

2. Click the **Select Objects** tool, then click on the box to select it and use the edit handles to resize and reshape it so that it covers the pool region. The edges of the box can extend past the edges of the pool area.

3. Click on the box to select it and click the **Open Object** edit button. In the **Geometric Shape Specification** dialog:
On the **GENERAL** panel, specify a **Height** of 35". This will be the thickness of the water surface.

Specify a **Floor to Bottom** height equal to the depth of the pool minus the distance from the top edge of the pool that you would like the water to come to. In this example, a **Floor to Bottom** height of -6" is used (36" pool depth minus 6" from the water to the lip of the pool).

On the **MATERIALS** panel, click on **Main Color**, then click the **Select Material** button and browse to **Materials> Landscaping> Water** to select a water material in the **Select Library Object** dialog.

Click **OK** to close the dialog and apply your changes.

4. Select **3D> Create Camera View> Full Overview** from the menu to see the results so far.
To create a patio around the pool

1. Select **Terrain> Feature> Rectangular Feature** from the menu, then click and drag a rectangular shape around the pool region. This feature will become the patio area around your pool.

2. Click the **Select Objects** tool, then click on the patio region to select it and use the edit handles to reshape the patio area so that it travels around the pool area.
In the image above, the patio feature region displays a grey fill color to emphasize its shape.

3. When you are satisfied with the shape of the patio, select **3D> Create Camera View> Full Overview** from the menu to see the pool with surrounding patio.

4. In the overview window, select **3D> Material Painter> Material Painter** from the menu.

5. In the **Select Library Objects** dialog, browse the Materials library category to find a material for the patio surface, click on a material to select it, then click **OK** to close the dialog.

6. When you return to the 3D view, your cursor will display the Material Painter icon. Click once on the patio area to apply the selected material to it.
In this example, **Masonry and Stone > Brick > Natural Brick > Red 5** is used, however, other suitable materials can be found in the **Concrete & Stone, Tile and DalTile libraries**.

7. If you would like, you can create more than one feature region to surround the pool and apply different materials to each one.

Many pools have a stepped platform for wading into the water.

To add a stepped platform in the pool
1. Select Library> Library Browser from the menu to open the Library Browser and browse to Shapes> Boxes.

2. Click on the Closed box to select it, then click once in an empty space in your drawing area to place a box at that location. This box will form the bottom step.

3. Click the Select Objects tool, then click on the box to select it and click the Open Object edit button. In the Geometric Shape Specification dialog:

   - Specify the Height of the step. In this example, the steps are each 6" high.
   - Specify the Width and Depth of the step, which correspond to the lengths of its sides. In this example, the bottom step is 60" on each side.
   - For the bottom step, a Floor to Bottom height of 0 is used.
   - On the Materials panel, click on Main color, then click the Select Material button and browse to find a material for the step.
   - Click OK to close the dialog and apply your changes.
4. With the step still selected, use the Move edit handle that displays at its center to move the step into position inside the pool.

   - In order for the steps to rest on the bottom of the pool, it's important that they be located entirely inside the pool's feature region.

5. Place another closed box from the library, edit its size, shape and material as described above, and move it into place above the bottom step.

   - In this example, each step tread is 10" wide, so the 2nd step has a Width and Depth of 50", the 3rd step, 40", and so on.

   - Since the Height of each step is 6", the 2nd step will have a Floor to Bottom height of 6", the 3rd step, 12", and so on.

   - If you have trouble moving a step into position, press the Ctrl key on your keyboard and then move the step. Pressing Ctrl allows you to move the object through obstructions caused by other objects.

6. Select 3D> Create Camera View> Full Camera then click and drag a camera arrow towards the steps to see the results.
A variety of outdoor accessories are available in the Library Browser.

To add furniture and accessories

A variety of outdoor accessories are available in the Library Browser.

1. Select Library> Library Browser from the menu to open the Library Browser.
   - Browse to Exteriors> Outdoor Living to find patio accessories and furniture.
   - Browse to Exteriors> Recreation to find pool accessories like diving boards.

2. Click on an item in the library to select it, then click once to place the selected library object at that location.
3. Repeat this process to place any additional items desired from the Library Browser.

Related Articles

- **Adding a Pond and Stream to Your Terrain** (/support/article/KB-00447/adding-a-pond-and-stream-to-your-terrain.html)
- **Creating an Indoor Swimming Pool** (/support/article/KB-02082/creating-an-indoor-swimming-pool.html)
- **Making a Deck Around a Hot Tub** (/support/article/KB-00853/making-a-deck-around-a-hot-tub.html)