

# BUILD A POND **harrogate aquatic** AQUARIUM & POND SPECIALISTS

A pond really brings a garden to life: whether it's a little natural pool to support and encourage wildlife or an elaborate ornamental pond full of fish and fountains! If you're stuck for ideas you can ask us to give you some pointers or we can recommend a local expert to design and install it for you.

**HOW BIG?** The larger the body of water, the more wildlife you will attract and sustain, and the more fish you will be able to keep in it. A bigger volume of water is easier to keep clean and provides a more stable environment: small containers can quickly get warm with very low oxygen levels in summer and will freeze solid in winter, and it isn't fair on the wildlife to encourage them to rely on a habitat that is dangerous in certain weather conditions. Ensuring that at least a third of the pond is a minimum of 60cm deep is a good benchmark for wildlife ponds. If you're planning to keep goldfish you should aim for 60-100cm depth, and for larger fish like koi and orfe, 100-150cm is better. Fish need deeper water to be able to survive the cold winter months where they hibernate at the bottom.

**LOCATION** It's worth planning where in your garden would be best to site your pond. Consider where the sunny and shady areas are in your garden: the best place for a pond is somewhere that only gets sun for part of the day. Too much sun will give you a pea-soup pond full of algae, and not enough sun can limit your choices of pond plant. Try not to site it close to your house if you want to attract wildlife, as many garden visitors are wary of humans and will be reluctant to venture too close to the house, at least in the early days. On the flip-side of this, having it close to the house can deter predators like herons and otters (but you'll still need a cover net). Placing it too close to larger trees and shrubs can be a problem when leaves, petals and fruit drop or blow into the water, and roots growing under the pond can cause distortion/subsidence and even leaks.

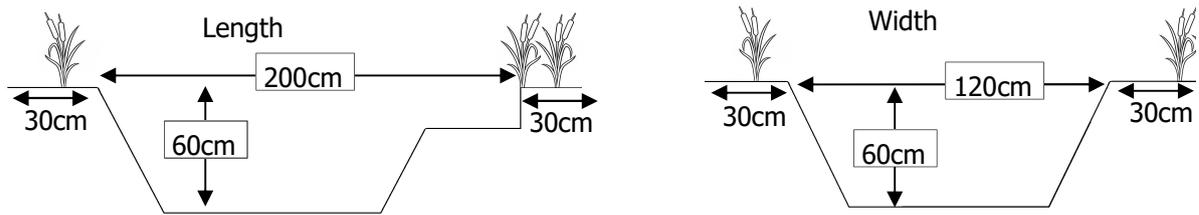
**DESIGN** Usually a wildlife pond looks best if it is an irregular informal shape with any decorative features arranged to look random and asymmetrical. Fish ponds can be natural-looking or more of a straight-sided formal shape. Either way, make sure you have sloping sides and/or some way for wildlife to be able to climb in and out of the water safely—we've all heard horror stories of mice or hedgehogs that have drowned in garden ponds. You can easily make a ramp out of a plank of wood wrapped in chicken wire for grip, but for a more natural look, a staircase of stones/cobbles or a characterful log will work just as well. Plan ahead to allow shelves for pond plants—marginal shelves at 15cm water depth will be suitable for most marginal and moisture-loving plants. Making one area very shallow (just a few inches) will encourage birds to come and drink and bath. Large cobbles placed like mini islands in the shallows allow easy access for bees and other insects to drink safely.

**CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS** The easiest approach is to just dig out a hole in the ground and line it with pond underlay and liner. This lets you have complete control of the shape, depth and shelves/levels. Our basic PVC liner has a 15 year guarantee and is perfect for most garden ponds. The underlay is a non-woven fibre sheet to protect the liner from punctures (sharp stones or invasive roots). It's no good using old carpet (despite what your know-it-all neighbour tells you!) as the fibres decay over time and leave you with no protection and possibly an expensive liner repair!

There are also several different preformed rigid plastic pond designs available if you want to keep it simple and buy something purpose-made.

**HOW MUCH POND LINER?** We can help you with the final calculations, but you basically dig out the hole to the size and shape you want and then measure the maximum length, maximum width and maximum depth. We find it easier to draw it out, imagining a

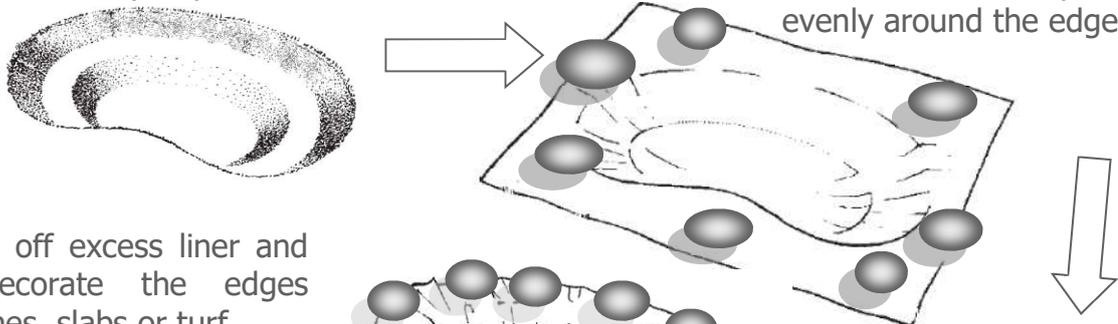
cross-section view from each side. You then imagine adding all the measurements on each view together to get the total size of liner you need—don't forget to add some extra to overlap at the edges.



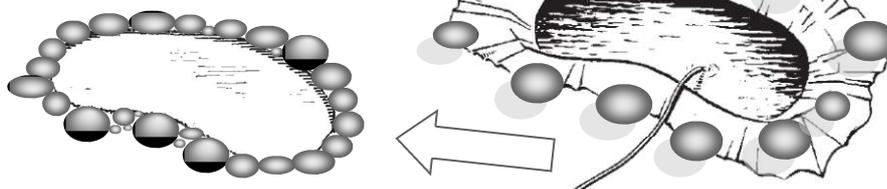
Total Liner Length = pond length + double pond depth + double overlap = 380cm  
 Total Liner Width = pond width + double pond depth + double overlap = 300cm  
 Then you round the measurements up to the nearest meter, so a 4m x 3m liner here.

### FITTING THE LINER

1. Dig the hole and line it with builders sand and underlay to protect the liner.
2. Carefully lay the liner and pin in place with smooth-sided bricks or rocks spaced evenly around the edge.



4. Trim off excess liner and secure/decorate the edges with stones, slabs or turf.



3. Slowly fill with water, folding and shaping the liner as the weight of the water pushes it into the right position.

**DECORATION** This is very much personal choice but for a natural look you can decorate the edges of the pond with stones, cobbles or sliced logs. If you have a lawn you can peel back the turf when you build the pond and then flop the turf back to cover the pond edging, allowing the grass to grow down to the water's edge like a river bank. A shingle beach area made with a mix of gravel and larger pebbles can look very effective and is great for insect life as they can safely drink from the shallow water between the pebbles without the risk of drowning.

**PUMPS & FILTRATION** A pump circulates water in the pond, adding oxygen which is vital for the eco-system. A filter physically removes and breaks down waste, keeping the water looking clear and reducing the amount of work you need to do! Having a filter and pump is recommended to give you the best chance of enjoying your pond, and it's absolutely essential if you plan to keep fish. There are lots to choose from to suit every budget and pond size, and many of them are combined with UV units to guarantee clear water. They can also run decorative fountains or spitting ornaments, or feed a cascade or rill. The sound and sight of moving water will bring your project to life! Our full range of pumps and filters are on our website ([www.harrogateaquatic.com](http://www.harrogateaquatic.com)) or you can pop into the shop and pick our brains on what would work best for your project.

Got questions? Talk to us!

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