The Big Do’s and Don’ts

When building or designing your pond

Don’t use swimming pool equipment for ponds!
- Pond requirements are very different.

Don’t let anyone tell you that you don’t need a bottom drain!
- Unless you want to be up to your knees each year hauling fish muck out of the bottom while your fish are stressing in a bucket waiting to return to their pond, a bottom drain is a must.

Don’t put rocks on the bottom of your pond!
- Probably the most common and worst mistake you can make. Rocks trap debris, eventually producing bad bacteria. Given time your pond liner or concrete will have a beautiful carpet of algae that doesn’t impair the water quality or clarity of your pond water. You won’t see it as algae but simply different colors on the pond floor. Your fish will love it and it contributes to the overall health of a living water environment.

Don’t have a shallow pond!
- Fish need depth in order to grow. Additionally, your fish will also need protection from the sun and from predatory animals, such as large birds that may be attracted to your pond ecosystem.

Do consider the long lifespan of koi!
- Koi are a long term investment. Some koi have been documented to be over 100 years old.

Do choose a location where you can see your pond for enjoyment as well as monitoring!

Do add a UV light!
- This is an absolute must, especially in the southwest because of the intense heat and sunlight!

Do add protective areas in the pond design!
- Providing shaded areas and hiding spots will allow fish to “hide” if necessary and rest in the shade.

Do go as BIG and as DEEP as you can!
- Large deep ponds are extremely beautiful and much more healthier and attractive than small shallow ponds. You and your fish will really benefit from this initial
A larger pond does not mean more maintenance, often it is less because the water conditions are more stable.

**When your pond is complete**

**Don’t add fish all at once!**
- The filter must be seasoned and it is best to start with “starter” fish which are not expensive. These fish will assist in starting your bio filter.

**Don’t over stock your pond!**
- Follow this golden rule: "One inch of fish per ten gallons of pond water”
- This amount of fish will do well if your pond is adequately filtrated and regular water changes are done.

**Don’t add fish or plants from unknown sources!**
- It is best to go slow. One unhealthy fish can infect your entire pond resulting in death and great expense. Plants can carry pathogens and parasites.
- Always quarantine new fish and plants. Fish and plants that are not properly introduced to your pond may kill every fish in your pond.

**Don’t over feed!**
- Only feed your fish as much as they can eat in 5 minutes.

**Don’t let your family and friends surprise you with gifts of fish and plants!**
- Some one is likely to do this for you not realizing the risk, so let them know.

**Don’t forget to remove the chlorine from the water before adding fish!**

**Do take advantage of your local AKCA Koi Club!**
- For more information and how to reach your local club see www.akca.org

**Do let your pond “season”!**
- The first year, your Living Water pond will go through many cycles in order to achieve the proper balance. Too much interference can prolong and complicate this process.

**Do test your water daily during the initial start up phase!**
- Usually about three weeks.

**Do test your water weekly thereafter!**

Do name your koi, enjoy them and relax knowing you have done the very best in creating a special home for these wonderful creatures!
- Your fish will bring you so much joy and completely change the character of your yard.
- You will be surprised at how relaxing it is to spend time with your fish.
- Your pond will definitely be a rewarding investment which will improve your yard and your life!

Avoid these common mistakes!

- Ponds are too shallow
- Ponds are too small
- Ponds don’t have a drain
- Ponds have no UV light
- Ponds have too many fish or fish are overcrowded
- Fish are being over fed
- Fish are being over medicated
- Ponds are poorly made
- Pond filtration is not adequate or poorly installed.
- Pond water is not tested
- New fish are not initially quarantined and are diseased