

Blatantly Honest Buyers Guide - Version 1.0

For anyone looking for some guidance on purchasing a new hot tub, here you go. I'm putting my tact on hold to give you the most honest info and opinions I've got. Reader beware.

Any and all accounts recorded below are completely fictitious and resemblances to persons living or dead should be plainly apparent to them and those who have had to deal with them.

1. Know what you can accommodate – How much space do I have? What type of access is there to the area? Do I have proper electrical? The answers to these questions can greatly affect the cost of installing a new hot tub. Have these answers ready so you're not surprised with additional costs during or after your purchase.

2. Buy local – Don't worry, I'm not going to rant about boosting the economy or pull on your heartstrings by saying that my kids need shoes. The simple fact is that once you've forked over your hard-earned cash and your tub has been delivered, local companies can't ignore you if you have issues or questions. You know exactly where to find us and we have a vested interest in keeping you happy. Joe Schmo who's rolling through town selling XYZ brand during his giant hot tub bonanza could tell you anything it takes to make a sale, he'll never have to see you again and good luck with getting any assistance from the 1-800 number.

3. Do your research – Please, for the love of everything holy, do this before and during your spa shopping. Manufacturer's website will promise rainbow waterfalls and filtration systems that will add decades to your life. Read INDEPENDENT reviews on brands and the stores that sell them before you make a final decision. Forums are another great place to find info on available brands and options. A few hours on the interwebs could save you years of headache. Take your time, do your homework and make an informed choice.

4. Wade through the options – Every brand's style of insulation is going to be the best according to the person who's trying to sell it to you. But in reality, there are pluses and minuses to every which way a spa can be built. If a sales person truly cares more about you than they do their commission, they will not only tell you that theirs is the best, they'll be able to explain why. Divulging both the pros and cons of a particular piece of equipment is the only way to allow you to make a decision that is in your best interest.

5. Know the price and the cost – The price at the store is the bulk of what you pay to own a tub. However, energy efficiency, durability, water quality and maintenance have a funny way of equaling out the overall cost during a spa's lifetime. A higher quality tub is going to be less costly to operate, last longer, and give you less hassle with shoddy equipment. There is also the piece of mind that a manufacturer's warranty can give you. When it comes to what you're paying up front, keep in mind that a \$6,000 spa that lasts 10 years is the exact same price as a \$9,000 spa that lasts 15. And, I'll guarantee you'll have more fun owning the latter.

6. Wet test a unit when at all possible – I personally don't expect you to purchase a car without test driving it. Similarly, if you'd like to know which spa performs the best, why

wouldn't you give it a test drive in the store. 10 minutes of wet testing a tub is far more informative than a 1 hour sales spiel. And don't be shy about donning your bathing suit around our shop, we don't employ supermodels.

7. MSRP is BS – No one has ever paid MSRP for a hot tub ever in the world... EVER. It's simply a made up number and no indication of the regular price at which a spa is normally sold. Joe Schmo likes to hide behind MSRPs and is really just trying to give you the illusion of a deal. That \$15,000 tub he's willing to give you for \$5,000 because he really likes you, it sells for \$5,000 at every show he goes to because that's all it's worth. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe you are getting a heck of a deal. Maybe Joe's company doesn't actually have outrageous markups on their tubs in an effort to dupe you. In which case Joe is simply a super nice guy for discounting his tubs 66% and losing money on each sale. Probably not a sound business model, but it could happen.

In summation, feeling like you got a deal isn't the same as getting one. Buy with confidence and know what you're getting into.

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