



# Hot Tub Buyer's Guide:

Questions for  
First-Time  
Shoppers

A complete resource every  
hot tub shopper needs!





### **TOP 10 QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

1. How much does a hot tub cost?
2. How do I begin the shopping process?
3. What are the costs to install a hot tub?
4. How much will my utility bill increase?
5. Is it difficult to maintain?
6. Is it hard to keep the water safe and clean?
7. Do I really need a hot tub?
8. How do I prep my yard for a hot tub?
9. What features should I look for?
10. Who will fix my hot tub if it breaks?

## Questions for First-Time Shoppers

At long last, you've finally decided to buy a hot tub. Even just thinking about it, you can feel your muscles relaxing in the soothing water as your frets and cares melt from your mind.

But before that happens, you'll want to be an informed shopper throughout the hot tub buying process. If you haven't done it before, it's natural to have plenty of questions, both about the process and about the ongoing relationship you'll have with your spa.

Don't worry, though—we're here to help. Since 1976, we've been listening to our buyers' questions and concerns. We've discovered what most first-time buyers wonder—and we're here with answers.



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## How much does a hot tub cost in 2017-2018?

The first question many people ask is, "How much does it cost to buy a hot tub?" Of course, the short answer is, "It depends on the hot tub." There are roughly four tiers of hot tub quality: entry level, value-priced, premium, and luxury.

- Entry-level hot tubs cost around \$2,500-5,000**
- Value-priced hot tubs cost around \$4,000-8,000**
- Premium hot tubs cost around \$6,000-10,000**
- Luxury hot tubs cost around \$9,000-16,000+**

So what's the difference between these levels of quality? Well, the price of a hot tub varies based on size, features, materials, components, and engineering. The better hot tubs will generally offer more varied sizes and configurations, have more entertainment options and more powerful jets, be built of more durable materials, and offer greater energy efficiency. To get the full details, [read more in our hot tub pricing guide.](#)

Of course the upfront costs should be compared with the long-term value of spa ownership. It's important to consider how you'll benefit from your hot tub, and how many years of enjoyment it will bring you.

**Also consider accessories in the cost of your purchase.** Generally speaking, [functional accessories](#) are the most important. Investing in a cover lifter for your hot tub greatly increases your ease of use, and therefore the likelihood you'll frequently visit your spa. A skimmer is a useful tool to clean out any unwanted detritus. To easily get in and out of your spa, consider steps or even a hand rail. An umbrella is also a useful accessory.

# How do I begin the research process to be a confident shopper?

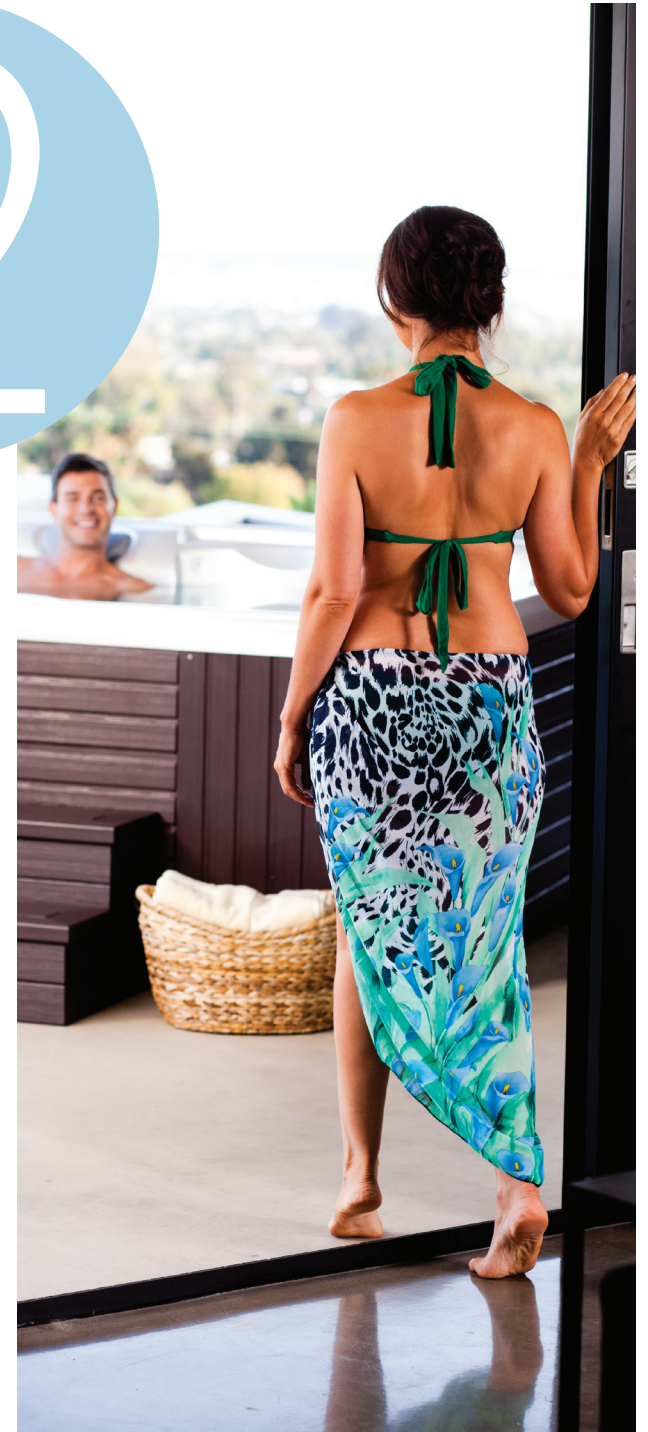


It's a good idea to do a little research to help you know what you're looking for. Check out different resources, and ask people with experience.

- **Start with an internet search.** The internet is a fantastic tool for finding dealers in your area, reviews of the best hot tub brands, and general information about hot tub ownership. When looking for reviews, it's a good idea to compare information from multiple sources and to find reviews from neutral sites like Spasearch.

- Once you've got a good idea of what you're looking for in a hot tub, the next step is to **your local dealer.**

- Nothing beats a **personal touch**. If you know any true spa enthusiasts—ideally someone who uses their spa daily and has owned it for a decade or longer—they'll be able to offer you a wealth of knowledge to guide you through buying and owning a hot tub.



# 3

## What are the costs to install a hot tub?

Installing a hot tub will take a few steps, and the overall cost varies depending on size, location, and complexity, but can range from around \$85 to \$800+. On average, the national cost for above ground installation costs a little more than \$300. Prior to installing a hot tub, you should consider and price out these elements:

- **New patio slab**
- **Electrical wiring/running conduit**
- **Gazebo or other custom installation options**

Overall, the costs associated with installing a portable spa are considerably less than those associated with installing an in-ground hot tub.

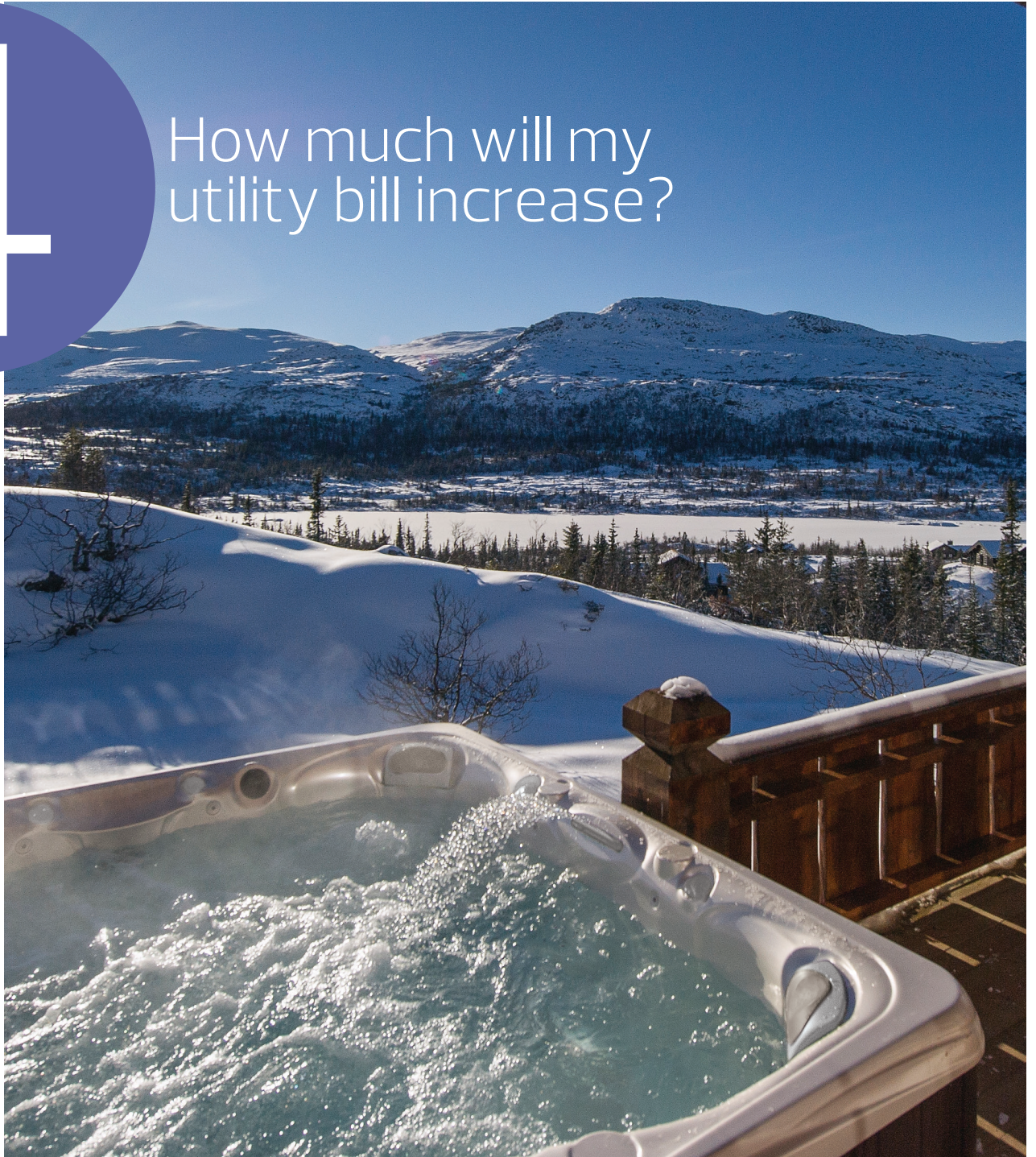


# 4

## How much will my utility bill increase?

Running a hot tub requires energy, so it should be no surprise that your electric bill will go up. However, certain hot tub features improve your energy efficiency and can minimize this additional cost.

Your heater, pump, insulation, and custom-fit cover are all part of the same system working to keep your water hot. High-end systems are very good at efficiently maintaining your spa's temperature, requiring a low continuous expenditure of energy. While it may be less expensive up front to purchase a hot tub with a low-quality heater, pump, or insulation, your electrical bills will be consistently lower with a better system. Owners of Caldera spas, for example, report that when their spa was used six days a week, their electric bills only increased by around \$20 per month.





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I want a hot tub, but I worry it might be difficult to maintain.

Hot tub manufacturers have worked hard to design hot tubs that are simple and quick to maintain. Dealers also have established service practices to help hot tub owners who lack the time, expertise, or interest to maintain a spa on their own.

- For added convenience, many high-end hot tubs have built-in water care systems. These feature filters of various sizes, types, and performance ratings. The higher the quality of your filter, the less often you'll need to purify or change your water.

- Water in hot tubs with dedicated circulation pumps and continuous circulation stays fresher longer than in hot tubs without these components.

With today's spas, it doesn't take a huge time commitment to keep your hot tub running. A small upfront investment in preventative maintenance pays great dividends over the life of your hot tub. A little care ensures your hot tub never adds any stress, only reduces it.

# 6

## Is it hard to keep the water clean and safe?

It only takes a small investment of time and energy to keep your water crystal clear and safe to use. In addition to changing your water and filters regularly, there are several different options of chemical additives to keep your water pure.

- The traditional and most common method is **chlorinating** your water. When using a chlorine system, keep an eye on your levels to make sure your water stays pure.
- **Bromine** has a lower pH than chlorine, making it easier on the skin and eyes while still doing a great job of killing algae, viruses, and other contaminants.
- **Ozone** systems neutralize contaminants by injecting ozone into the water, while a non-chlorine oxidizer combined with other minerals cleans the water and slows bacterial growth.





# 7

## Do I really need a hottub? What if I get it and don't use it enough?

Owning a hot tub can have a profound, long-lasting positive impact on your life. A hot tub can help you grow closer to your family, enhance your sense of well-being and physical health, and reduce muscle soreness. Using your hot tub regularly will help you renew yourself, rejuvenate your body and mind, and reconnect with what's important in your life.

- **Renew.** Taking a little time each day to relax and center yourself in the warm, welcoming bubbles of your spa will improve your sense of general well-being.
- **Rejuvenate.** To rejuvenate is to reclaim your youth, in body and spirit. Simply sitting in your hot tub helps you burn calories, as well as reduce stiffness and muscle fatigue. It helps you forget

the stresses of work or your commute and relaxes your worried mind. Your spa can improve your general physical health as well by relieving tension and unknotting tense muscles.

- **Reconnect.** As a social space, free from the distractions of television or the internet, a hot tub is a wonderful place to grow and nurture your connections with your friends and family. When you're in the hot tub with your partner or your children, you're able to spend quality time together away from the pressures of the world outside.

# What do I have to do to prepare my space for a hot tub?



An experienced hot tub dealer can connect you with the help you need to ensure a smooth and easy spa installation.

Free site visits and consultations are generally available to take the worry and guesswork out of the process. Your dealer will help you plan for:

- **Location and space requirements.** They'll measure clearance for delivery, find the ideal place to locate the spa, and offer alternatives for difficult installations, such as using a crane.
- **Surface base requirements.** Your dealer will be able to help you connect with a contractor who can create a concrete slab or deck to place your spa on.


- **Electrical supply.** It's entirely understandable if you don't want to take electrical matters into your own hands. Your dealer will be able to find a qualified electrician to handle your wiring and connection issues.

Your dealer will also be able to inform you about your delivery options, how long delivery will take, and whether you'll need to obtain a planning permit. Once your spa is delivered and properly installed, it should be ready to use as soon as it heats up.





## What features should I look for?



The most important feature to look for in a hot tub is functionality. After that, shop for performance, comfort, and style. Your hot tub will be part of your life for years to come, so it's a good idea to choose features you'll be happy with down the road. Here are some of the basic questions on features you should ask your dealer:

- Is it large enough to fit my family?
- How well does it keep the water clean?
- Who is the manufacturer, and how reliable are they?
- How easy is it to operate this model?
- What are this model's typical operating costs?
- Will I use it for backyard entertainment, or just for quiet time alone?
- Will I use it alone or with other people?
- What accessories come with this model? What other accessories do you recommend?

A good dealer will be happy to answer your questions and help you find the hot tub that suits you best. They can even arrange a time for you to stop by and test how it feels to sit in the spa, dry or wet. They'll be your partner down the road as well, providing you the service you need year after year.

Who will fix  
my hot tub  
if it breaks?

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This depends on your preference. If something goes wrong with your hot tub due to a defect, you'll probably be covered under the manufacturer's warranty. When something wears down after years of use, if you have the time and enjoy the challenge, you might be able to conduct most repairs yourself. If you'd rather use a professional, your dealer should be able to handle any repairs onsite. If they can't, they should be able to point you to a trustworthy technician or contractor.





Now that you've got a pretty good idea of what the process entails, you can comfortably begin your hot tub search. It's okay to take your time and be patient. Remember that any time you put into searching out the best spa for you will be paid back with years of enjoyment. Think ahead to your next decade of bliss—and relax.

Our Caldera spas are engineered with precision, built with top-of-the-line components, and designed to delight the eye and soothe the muscles. [Take a look through our models](#) to find the spa that has the features you need. Or, if you're ready to see what's available in your area, enter your [zip code](#) to find and contact your local dealer.

### **What a way to start the day!**

*One of my favorite times of the day is when I first get up and have a cup of coffee while sitting in my Caldera Spa. It a great way to reflect while getting a massage. I have done this daily since getting the spa over 2 years ago. I even do some yoga stretches in it.*

*My backyard is my sanctuary and the spa is mainly why this is so.*

***Darc, Caldera owner since 2012***

### **Stress relief in my Caldera waters**

*My husband & I use our hot tub daily, sometimes twice a day. We are mountain bikers, and i am a member at a gym so after a long ride or workout we wind down in the tub to relax our muscles. It is simply heaven.*

***Mare, Caldera owner since 2014***



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