

# The Deep Clean: Preparing Pools for Plaster and Paint

A swimming pool is the crown jewel of a backyard, but it requires significant maintenance to stay sparkling. Every 10 to 15 years, a concrete or gunite pool needs resurfacing. The plaster becomes rough, stains appear, or old paint layers begin to delaminate. Homeowners often focus on choosing the new finish—whether it is a pebble aggregate, a quartz plaster, or a high-end epoxy paint. However, the success of that new finish depends entirely on what happens before it is applied.

You cannot put fresh plaster over old, failing paint or algae-stained concrete. It simply won't bond. The new surface will hollow out and pop off within a year. To ensure a mechanical bond that lasts, the substrate must be stripped clean and profiled. This is a job that is too tough for acid washing alone. It requires the aggressive cleaning power of sandblasting.

## Removing Multiple Layers of Old Epoxy

In the past, many pools were painted with chlorinated rubber or epoxy paints. These coatings are incredibly durable, which is great when they are new, but a nightmare when it is time to resurface. If you try to plaster over them, the plaster has nothing to grip.

Searching for [sandblasting in NJ](#) brings you to the solution. Sandblasting is the most efficient method for stripping multiple layers of old pool paint. It cuts through the epoxy and rubber, exposing the raw gunite or concrete shell underneath. Unlike chemical strippers, which are messy, toxic, and hard to neutralize, sandblasting leaves a chemically clean surface with zero residue. This is the ideal blank canvas for any new pool finish.

## Creating a Mechanical Key for Plaster

Even if the pool wasn't painted, old plaster gets smooth and dense over time. New plaster needs a rough surface, or "mechanical key," to hang onto. If the surface is too smooth, the new coat will slump and separate.

Blasting scarifies the surface. It opens up the pores of the concrete and creates a sandpaper-like texture. This increases the surface area significantly, giving the new material millions of microscopic ridges to

lock into. This is particularly important for the bond beam (the top 12 inches of the pool) and the steps, where delamination is most common. A properly blasted pool shell ensures that your expensive new pebble finish stays put for decades.

### **Cleaning Stone Coping and Water Features**

The pool coping—the stone or concrete edging around the perimeter—also takes a beating. It gets stained by suntan oils, calcium deposits (scale), and environmental dirt. Natural stone coping like flagstone or limestone can look dull and grey after years of exposure.

gentle abrasive blasting can revitalise these surfaces. It removes the calcium line at the water level that is nearly impossible to scrub off by hand. It brings back the natural colour variation in the stone. It also creates a non-slip texture on smooth coping stones, improving safety for children running around the pool edge. This detail work frames the pool beautifully, making the water look even bluer.

### **Preparing for Tile Installation**

If you are retiling the waterline, the surface prep is just as critical. The old thin-set mortar must be removed completely to ensure the new tiles sit flush and adhere correctly.

Sandblasting removes the old mortar beds quickly and evenly. It leaves a flat, sound surface for the tile setter to work on. This prevents "lippage" (uneven tiles) and ensures that the new waterline tiles are secure. It is the difference between a professional-looking tile job and one that looks like a DIY patch-up.

### **Conclusion**

Renovating a pool is a major investment. Don't risk the longevity of your new finish by skimping on the prep work. Sandblasting provides the clean, rough, and sound foundation necessary for a beautiful and long-lasting pool restoration. It is the heavy lifting that makes the final result shine.

### **Call to Action**

Build your pool renovation on a solid foundation. Ensure your pool shell is perfectly prepped and cleaned before the new finish goes on.

Visit: <https://rustylions.com/sandblasting>