yorkshire hot tubs

The 7 Hot Tub Buying Mistakes

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The 7 hot tub buying mistakes and how to avoid them...

This consumer information report is designed to help educate you about the seven common mistakes every consumer should know when shopping for the “right” hot tub. This free report will arm you with just the right facts and information you need to know in order to make a smart hot tub purchase.

We can help you avoid the disappointment and headache of wasting your hard-earned money by making the wrong choice.

Buying a hot tub is an important decision. After your home and your car it’ll likely be the third most expensive thing you buy. You need to be informed about your options and understand what questions to ask so you buy the right hot tub for you.

This report will help give you the information you need to make a smart and informed hot tub purchase.

What you don't know **can hurt you...**

The worst thing that can happen is to purchase a hot tub for thousands of pounds and discover a bunch of unwelcome surprises. You need to learn as much as you can about hot tubs so that your final decision will result in complete satisfaction and enjoyment.

Unfortunately hot tubs can be very complex with a vast array of options and features. Salespeople all have a different spin on what's good, what's not, what's a must-have and what's optional. You need to understand these points BEFORE you walk into a hot tub shop so that you can decipher truth from fiction. Too many consumers walk right into a cheap hot tub store and get sold on the first visit. Avoid buying in haste and suffering the consequences later!

The 7 hot tub **buying mistakes revealed...**

There is a pattern of mistakes made by consumers that could easily be avoided if they had only educated themselves before going shopping.

The following are the seven most common mistakes consumers make when purchasing a hot tub:

Mistake #1: Focusing on price versus long-term efficiency and satisfaction.
Mistake #2: Not investigating the structural integrity of the hot tub.
Mistake #3: Underestimating the amount of required maintenance.
Mistake #4: Not selecting the right hydrotherapeutic jet structure.
Mistake #5: Not taking into consideration the area in which your hot tub will be placed.
Mistake #6: Overlooking the importance of the warranty.
Mistake #7: Not choosing a reputable dealer and manufacturer.

Mistake #1

Focusing on price vs long-term efficiency & satisfaction

Most consumers have the number £2,000 to £3,000 in their head when they walk into a hot tub showroom. When told the actual price they get a huge shock. They had no idea that hot tubs can cost much more. What they don't understand is that many cheap hot tubs can end up costing far more in the long term than expensive models through higher electrical bills, chemicals, parts and other unexpected headaches. "Price is once; cost is forever."

When shopping for hot tubs, don't focus so much on the up-front cost, but on the hot tub's total lifetime cost. This forces you to consider the longer term efficiency rather than just the price tag. Depending on the efficiency of the hot tub, the climate you live in, and the level of maintenance received, your operating costs can differ dramatically.

There are many factors that go into how efficient a hot tub is. Let's look at a few elements that can make or break your hot tub efficiency.

1. Insulation - Most hot tubs are placed outdoors so are subject to the weather conditions. Insulation should be a key consideration when determining a hot tub's efficiency. The better insulated your hot tub, the less you'll pay in heating bills. You'll discover two types of insulation techniques when shopping for your hot tub; "Full Foam" and "Dead Air Space". Dead Air Space works on the principle that hot air will stay trapped in an enclosed, insulated air space. The Full Foam insulation technique fills all the dead air space in the inner compartment of the hot tub with a combination of high and low-density foam. The problem with full foam is that it is very difficult to service and it doesn't trap any of the waste heat created by the motors.

2. Hot Tub Cover - The hot tub cover is important in that heat rises, and your cover creates a barrier. Many hot tub covers are made out of regular vinyl covering with Styrofoam inside. The better hot tub covers are made out of marine vinyl, which was specifically developed to withstand even the worst weather conditions. In addition, look for hot tub covers with a min of 4" to 3" tapered foam, and one that has an insulated bumper down the middle of the fold for maximum heat retention A tight-fitting cover lock to form a protective seal to retain heat and to keep the water clean longer is also essential. Lastly, look for a cover that has locks to help keep the hot tub safe when no one is around.

3. Pump and Motor - Many salespeople will boast about the power of their water jets and pumps. They'll quote horsepower ratings and water per minute ratings. The fact is, water flow control is more important than horsepower ratings, as oversized horsepower pumps just increases your electricity bill. The ultimate test is to physically feel the power of the water jets and compare it to the gallons per minute ratings and the horsepower ratings. You want strong water jets with a high gallon-per-minute rating and a lower horsepower rating. This means the hot tub is more efficient. When you check horsepower ratings, ask for the "continuous operation" rating which is really all you should care about. Don't be fooled when the salesperson quotes a "market rating" or an "uprating". These rating only measure the horsepower during start-up.

4. Filtration Pump - Some manufacturers use one large jet pump for filtration and hydrotherapy cycles. Others use filtration systems that come with a small filtration pump, which is dedicated to pumping water through the filters, ozone and heating systems. Using the small filtration pump greatly reduces the wear and tear on the large jet pump while reducing overall electricity costs and excessive noise.

Mistake #2

Not investigating the **structural integrity of the hot tub**

The hot tub shell and the outer cabinetry are areas of the hot tub that often get overlooked because, to the average person, they all look and act the same. This couldn't be further from the truth.

Hot Tub Shell - The hot tubs shell in most cases is very durable and most come with long or even lifetime warranties. About 90% of all hot tub shells are made of acrylic or thermal plastic, which are both very durable. Under the acrylic shell you usually find fibreglass. To make sure the bond between the acrylic and the fibreglass is sturdy, your hot tub should use a vinyl ester resin skin coat or a bond laminate. This provides a triple-layer shell that will provide extra support to the areas of the hot tub that hold a lot of weight and protect from cracking, peeling, blistering, or delamination.

Cabinetry - Early generation hot tubs were traditionally made out of redwood or cedar due to their inherent durability. However, most new hot tubs are being manufactured with synthetic cabinets. Today, synthetic cabinets are superior in durability and impervious to various weather conditions such as extreme heat, cold or UV rays. Plus they are virtually maintenance-free. The cabinetry is not just there to look pretty. Sometimes it is part of the structural support that holds and balances the weight of the hot tub. Make sure your hot tub has various support beams that extend from the lip of the hot tub and the seat of the hot tub to the floor.

If your hot tub is made out of wood, make sure it is high quality wood. Look for any knots or splintering. Make sure the wood is "kiln-dried" preventing it from warping or cracking. In addition, ensure that it is treated with a UV protectant stain so that it will be protected from snow and rain, but more importantly from UV rays, which are more damaging than snow, rain and heat put together. One last thought about the cabinetry; make sure that the underside of the hot tub is well sealed so moisture, pests, and rodents don't get into your insulation and plumbing.

Mistake #3

Under-estimating the **required hot tub maintenance**

Chemicals - First let's explore the myth of chemical maintenance. Many hot tub retailers will insist that you always maintain the correct chemical levels in the hot tub at all times and you will need to check it every time you use your hot tub. In reality the retailer is just trying to sell you a lot of supplies that you don't need. More chemicals are not necessarily better!

Filtration - Filters help to cleanse your hot tub of body oils, lotions, hair sprays etc. Hot tub filters require cleaning which can be a hassle. However, a quality hot tub will have a filtration system that filters both the top of the water and the bottom of the hot tub. Be sure to choose the hot tub that has pressurised filtration as opposed to a suction side filter. Pressure side filters clean 100% of the water in only 15 minutes as opposed to suction side filters that can take up to 4 hours to do the same.

Draining - Most manufacturers recommend draining and cleaning your hot tub no more than three to four times per year depending on how well you maintain it. It can take an average hot tub 4 – 10 hours to drain through a gravity drain and even when it gets to the bottom there is still 15cm of water left that needs to be bailed out. Look for a hot tub that makes this process simple.

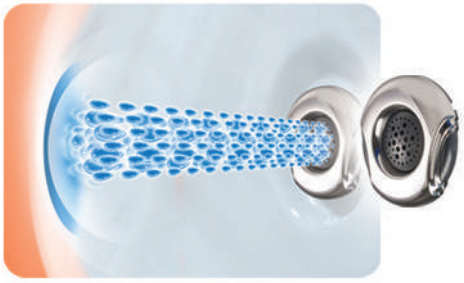
Exterior - The hot tub cover needs to be well treated in order to repel water and withstand the elements. Don't be led into thinking this is a major task. All you have to do is spray your cover with a water repellent every 2-3 months.

Mistake #4

Not selecting the **right therapeutic jet structure**

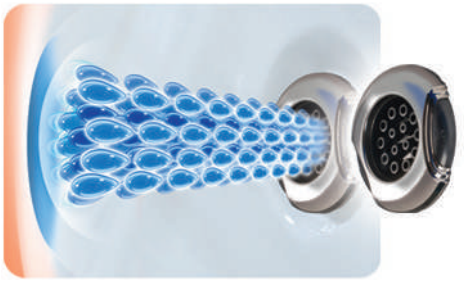
One of the primary reasons for owning a hot tub comes from its hydrotherapeutic benefits. There are 8 major reasons why people buy hot tubs; back pain, neck pain, sports recovery, leg pain, stress relief, insomnia, headache relief and over all body awakening.

The shape, type or position of the jet determines the type of hydrotherapy you will receive. You need to get this right because jetting is what hot tubs are all about. If you have upper back pain and the hot tub you buy doesn't have a jet structure targeting that problem, it renders the hot tub pretty useless. Also, if the jet structure isn't flexible enough to adapt to the type of massage you want, you'll always receive the same old massage over and over again. Make sure you buy a hot tub that has different seats and different massages. Look for a hot tub with individually adjustable jets. Many hot tubs allow you to adjust the water pressure to a group of jets, but not each one individually. Being able to adjust the water flow individually allows you to customise your hydrotherapy experience.



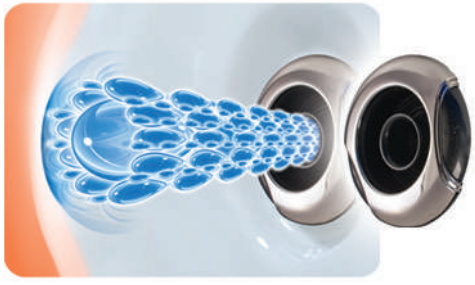
Wet Testing - Physically getting into the hot tub to test it while filled with water will help you feel the strength and pattern of the hot tub jets. This will give you an idea of the massage given by that particular jet. **Make sure that...**

- The seating fits your body form
- The jets hit the areas of your body that needs therapeutic help
- You feel comfortable in each seat
- You can move from seat to seat with ease
- The jets aren't too strong but provide enough power to give a good massage
- You can adjust the water jets to your desired preference
- You can reach the controls with ease
- The hot tub will hold the right number of people you expect to invite in



Water Jets - are those small holes where the water comes out. Heated water is forced through the small, contoured holes making a jet-like action. There is a wide variation of jets with which you should familiarise yourself. Several types of jets are engineered to give you a unique and different sensation. The jets should be able to give you several types of massage options such as:

- **Directional Jets -** a direct, non-rotating water stream, which is the most basic of all jets.
- **Rotating Jets -** supplies a rotating water action, which is often the most preferable massage because it imitates the type of massage you might get from a human massage therapist.
- **Waving Jets -** Provides a waving sensation either back and forth or up and down.
- **Air Jets -** emit air down around your legs and lower back that create a soft tissue massage.
- **Pulsating Jets -** provides a gentle pulsating massage.
- **Neck Jets -** neck jets can be a wonderfully soothing therapy for you if you experience neck aches or even headaches from time to time. Most manufacturers have designed neck jets into their hot tubs. Be sure that you purchase a hot tub with neck jets that cascade through your pillow and are adjustable.



- **Foot Jets** - many of the lower end hot tubs lack foot jets that provide foot massaging. You only need one good foot massage to know that it's one of the best areas of the body to receive a massage. Why? Because all your nerves end in your feet. So there is a lot of truth to the charts that show how different parts of the foot affect different areas of the body. In fact, some types of lower back pain can be treated through good foot massage.
- **Seating -** is a big factor in your quest for the right hydrotherapeutic massage. The seats in your hot tub should have lumbar support so that you don't have to slouch down like you do in your bath. The water should at least touch your shoulders, if it doesn't you'll never benefit from the hydrotherapy. If the hot tub you are looking at has a lounge seat, make sure it is deep enough to allow you to get the full hydrotherapy benefits offered. Some lounge seats are so shallow that you float instead of getting a massage. Also, make sure the fixed jets on the hot tub are hitting the right places on your body to get a good muscle tissue massage.
- **Aromatherapy -** A relatively new design in some hot tubs is the option to have a light fragrance injected into the air jets that provide different sensations. Some aromas provide a relaxing and calming mood while other provides a more invigorating experience.
- **Noise -** Although noise has nothing to do with the jet structure, it has everything to do with your overall hot tub experience. The pumps are a big cause of hot tub noise which can ruin your relaxation experience.

Mistake #5

Not taking into consideration **where you'll be placing your hot tub**

You must decide where you are going to put your hot tub before you go shopping. If your hot tub will be placed outside, make sure that it isn't in a low area that may get flooded during a heavy storm. Don't put it in or around any sand which can cause damage. Make sure that the surface is firm and level, preferably on a flat concrete slab.

If you are planning to have a hot tub installed on a patio or deck, have a structural engineer inspect the deck to ensure it can support the weight of the hot tub when filled with water and people. An average four person hot tub weighs around 3000kg when full.

Mistake #6

Overlooking the **importance of the warranty**

The types of warranties that you will see when shopping for your hot tubs will include the following areas:

Shell Structure - Warrants against water loss due to defects in the hot tub shell (average warranty period is 1 to 10 years).

Shell Surface - Warrants the interior surface of the hot tub against blistering, peeling, cracking, and delamination (average warranty period is 1 to 5 years).

Leaks - Warrants against the loss of water due to defects in the fittings and plumbing lines (average warranty period is 1 to 3 years).

Equipment - Warrants the hot tub's electronic controls and pumps against mechanical or electrical breakdown, including parts and labour (average warranty period is 1 to 3 years).

When you inspect your warranty, make sure that it covers each of these areas, including leaks. One of the "fine print" items the some hot tub retailers don't divulge is that the warranty may be 'pro-rated' from day one. This means that you pay a certain percentage of the cost to fix it and the retailer will pay a percentage of the cost to fix the hot tub. Make sure that you get a "full-warranty"

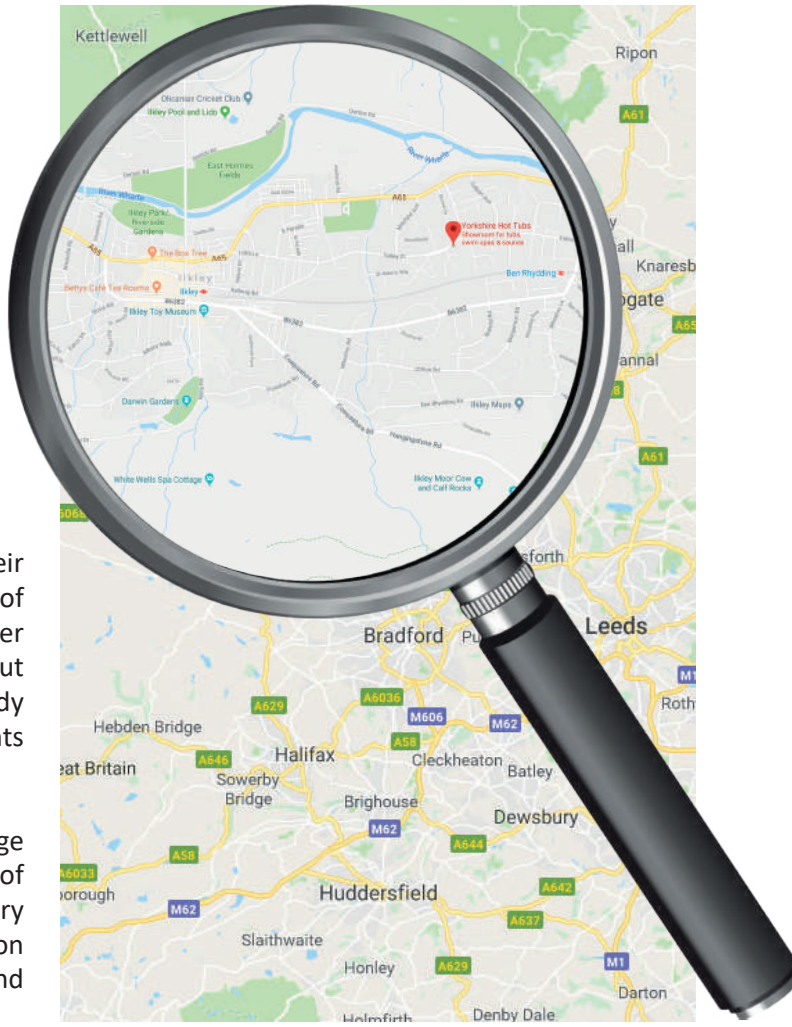
Mistake #7

Not choosing a **reputable dealer and manufacturer**

Choosing the right dealer is as important as choosing the right hot tub. You want to purchase your hot tub from a dealer that is honest, sells a high quality hot tub, has been in business for a while, and has a solid warranty. Anything less could spell disappointment.

The best way to judge a good dealer is to talk to some of their customers. Ask the dealer for permission to contact a few of their customers to discuss their experience. When you visit other dealers, ask them about the last dealer you just visited, about the hot tubs that their competition carries that you've already visited. More than likely, they'll bring up some interesting points that you'll want to verify.

When you visit our hot tub show room in Ilkley, we'll encourage you to ask as many questions as possible. We'll walk through all of the detail covered in this document to ensure you select the very best hot tub for your unique requirements. We have hot tubs on display waiting to be tested, so bring down your swimmers and experience the real benefits of a Hydropool tub first-hand!



Glossary of terms

For the **hot tub beginner**

You'll find out very quickly that hot tubs have their own language. Bromine, ozonator, acidity, skimmer, pull valves, uprate and water jets are all terms that most consumers have never heard of; however, each is important to understand to make an informed hot tub decision. Below are some potentially confusing terms you may hear while shopping for your hot tub.

Horsepower Rating - The amount a hot tub pump delivers while in operation. Two types of horsepower ratings are "continuous operating" and "brake" (also called marketing horsepower). Continuous operating is the amount of horsepower the motor produces while in operation and brake horsepower is the amount of horsepower the motor produces on start-up before dropping to its continuous operating rate. Uprated is the amount of horsepower given off during the start-up, which lasts only for a couple of minutes. The maximum horse power of any hot tub pump is 4 hp as it is impossible to run anything bigger on a home electrical panel.

GPM - Gallons of water per minute, which is a measurement of the amount of water a hot tub pump can push per minute.

Ozonator - A water care system that neutralises water contaminants using ozone.

Shell - The structural layer of the hot tub usually made out of a combination of acrylic, resin, and fibreglass.

Jetting - A system in which water surges through small water jets, creating different actions that deliver various massages.

Hydromassage - The water jet action and air together to create different massaging sensations.

Filtration - The water cleansing process that takes place when water passes through the filter of the hot tub.

Skimmer - Part of the filtration system that sucks in surface water contaminants such as body lotion, hair spray, and oils.

Dead Air Hot Space - The space between the hot tub shell and the cabinet that is left open and doesn't contain insulation.

Thermostatic Controls - Electronic controls that maintain the temperature of the hot tub at a pre-set level.

Wet Testing - Testing the hot tub before purchase by physically getting into a hot tub that is filled with water.

Plumbing - The fittings and lines (pipes) through which the hot tub water circulates.

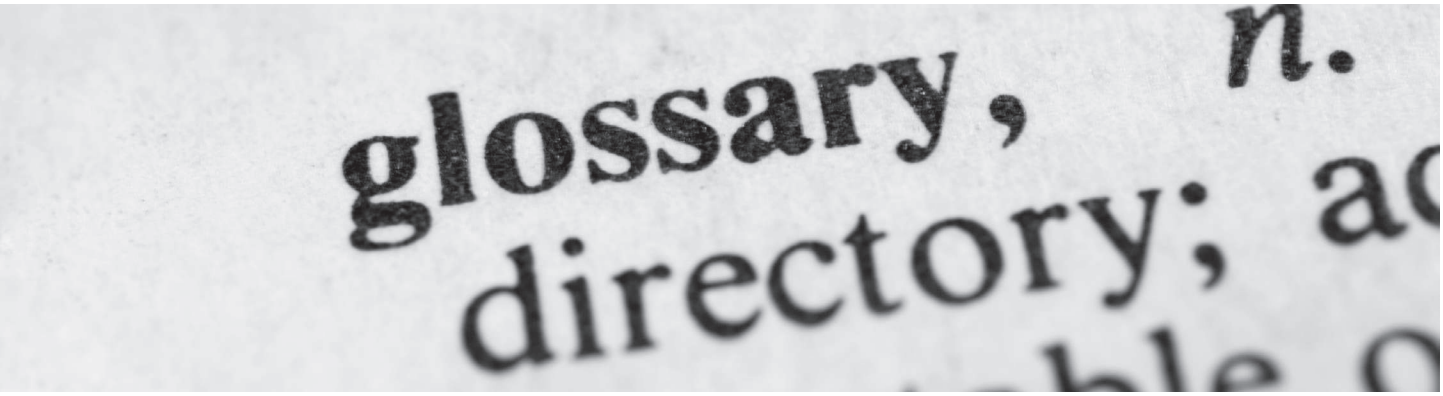
Heater Element - The electrical element that provides heat to the hot tub water.

Hot Tub Cover - The removable cover that provides heat insulation and weather protection.

Air Controls - Controls that adjust the amount of air flow to various jets.

Filtration Pump - A small energy efficient pump that moves water through the filters, ozone and heating system.

Brominator - Dispenses the chemical bromine in the hot tub water for purification purposes.



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