

# Pool Barrier Safety Requirements

Installed before 8 April 1991

# Pool Barrier Safety Requirements

## Information for existing pools and spas constructed before 8 April 1991

Enjoying the water is a great Australian pastime, but owning or building a pool comes with strict safety responsibilities that apply all-year-round. Australian standards require you to ensure that your fencing is properly installed, fully compliant and adequately maintained.

All swimming pools and spas on residential properties in Victoria capable of holding water to a depth of 30cm (300mm) or more are required to be surrounded by a pool barrier. This includes bathing, wading, inflatable, above ground, indoor pools, hot tubs and jacuzzis.

All gates, windows, fences or walls forming part of a pool barrier must be kept in good working order at all times.

This information applies to domestic properties that had a pool or spa installed **before 8 April 1991**.

### Applicable Building Regulation Part 7 Division 1

#### A barrier to prevent access to the swimming pool area can be:

A wall of a building that meets the following criteria:

- Any doors or gates within the wall are fitted with a self-latching or self-locking device, with the opening mechanism located at least 1.5m above the ground or internal floor level; and
- Has a self closing device that returns the door or gate to the closed position without using manual force.

Any window within the wall that meets the following criteria:

- Located 2.4m above the external paving or ground level, or
- That is 0.9m above the floor level of the room containing the window, or
- Has a catch, bolt or lock located 1.5m above the floor level of the room containing the window, or
- Has a securely fitted fly screen.

A pool barrier fence that meet the following criteria:

- The pool barrier must be at least 1.2m high, and
- Has horizontals at least 0.9m apart when the spacing of the verticals is between 10mm and 100mm, and
- Has verticals no further apart than 10mm in all other cases.

A boundary paling fence or imperforate fence that meets the following criteria:

- It is at least 1.5m in height measured above ground level on the approach side, and
- That is in good condition.

Any door or gate that meets the following criteria:

- The gate or door must be fitted with a self-latching or self-locking device with the opening mechanism located at least 1.5m above the ground or internal floor level, and
- The gate or door has a device that returns the door or gate to the closed position without using manual force, and
- The gate or door is minimum 1.2m high, and
- The gate or door has horizontals at least 0.9m apart when the spacing of verticals is between 10mm and 100mm, and
- The gate or door has verticals no further apart than 10mm in all other cases.

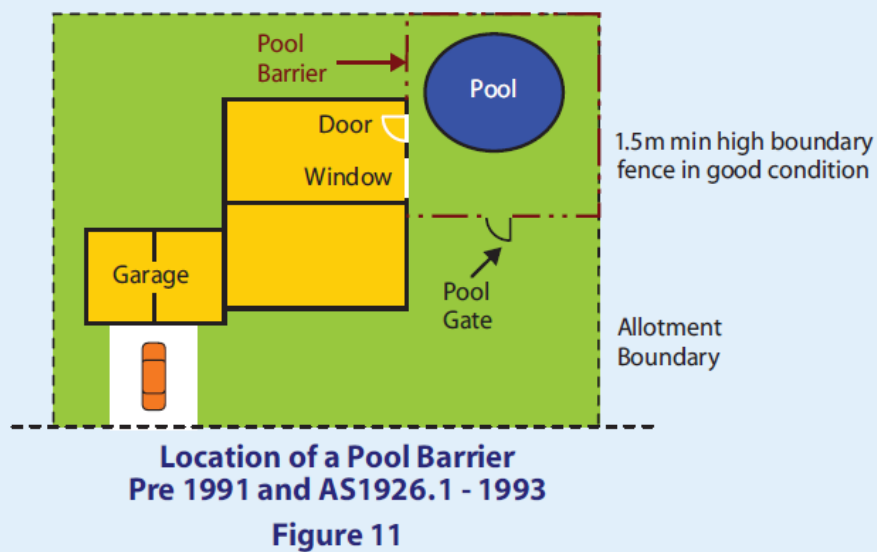
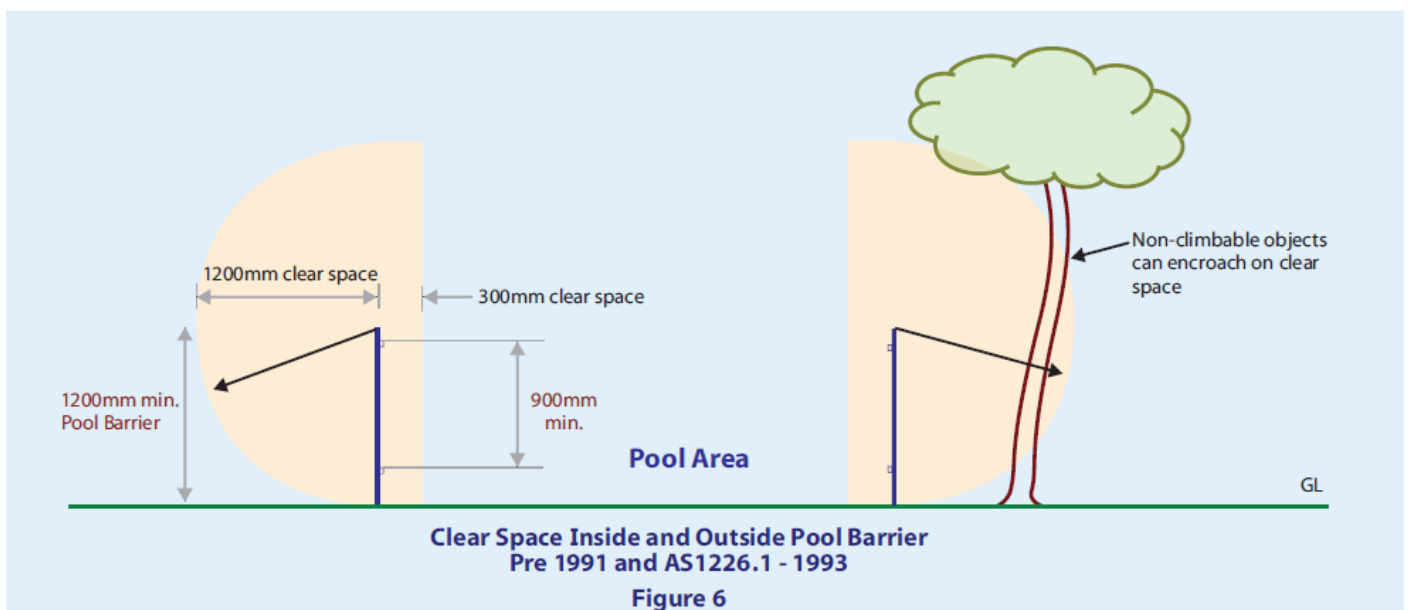
Climbing projections and indentations

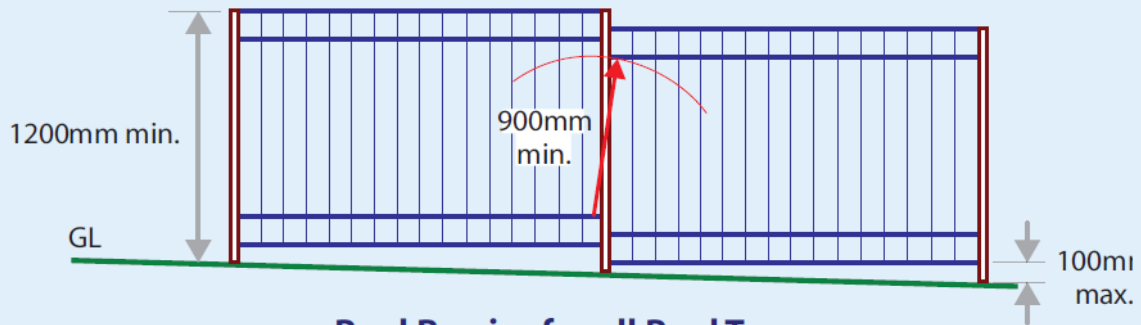
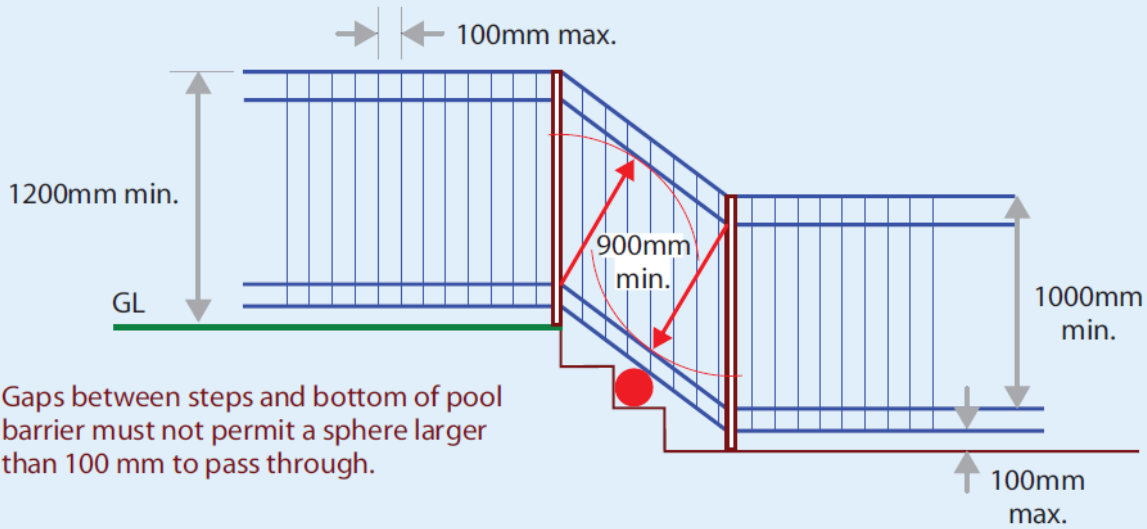
- Projections or indentations (potential footholds or handholds for children) on the outside surface of the pool barrier must not exceed 10mm, with a minimum spacing of 1.2m.

## Above ground pools

Above ground pools do require a pool barrier to protect access to the ladder, pump and filter, which a child could use to climb into the pool. The pool barrier must be 0.3m clear of any part of the ladder, pump, filter or any other climbable object.

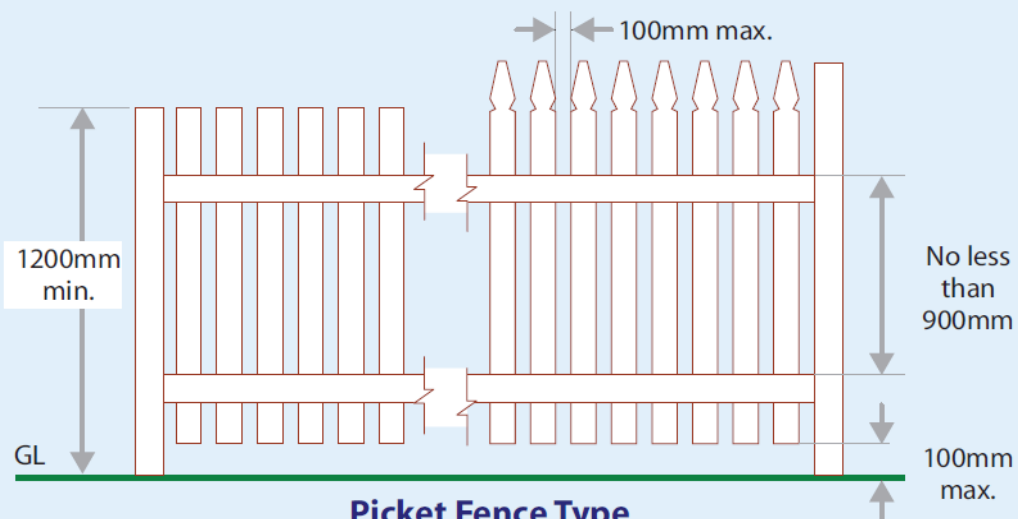
The wall of an above ground pool can form part of a pool barrier provided the walls of the pool are a minimum of 1.2m high above ground level and are non-climbable.





**Pool Barrier for all Pool Types**

**Figure 3**

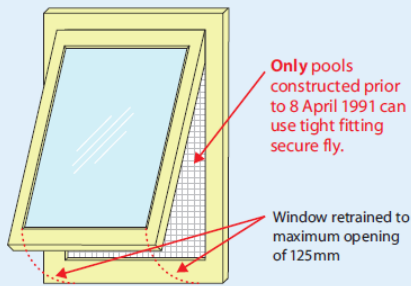


**Picket Fence Type Pool Barrier**

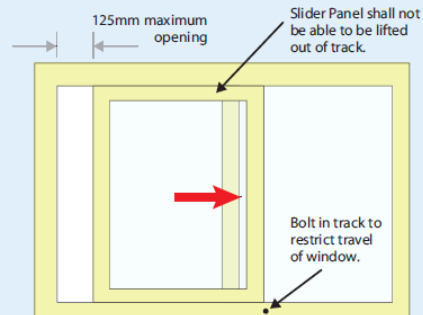
**Figure 4**

## Important information when upgrading your pool and/or pool fence

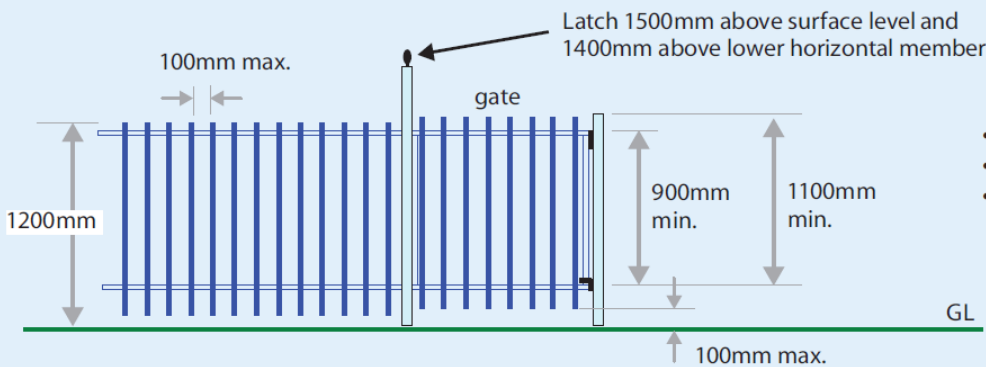
In accordance with the Building regulations, all work to replace a swimming pool and pool barrier, requires a Building Permit.



**Awning Window Forming Part of a Pool Barrier**  
Figure 9

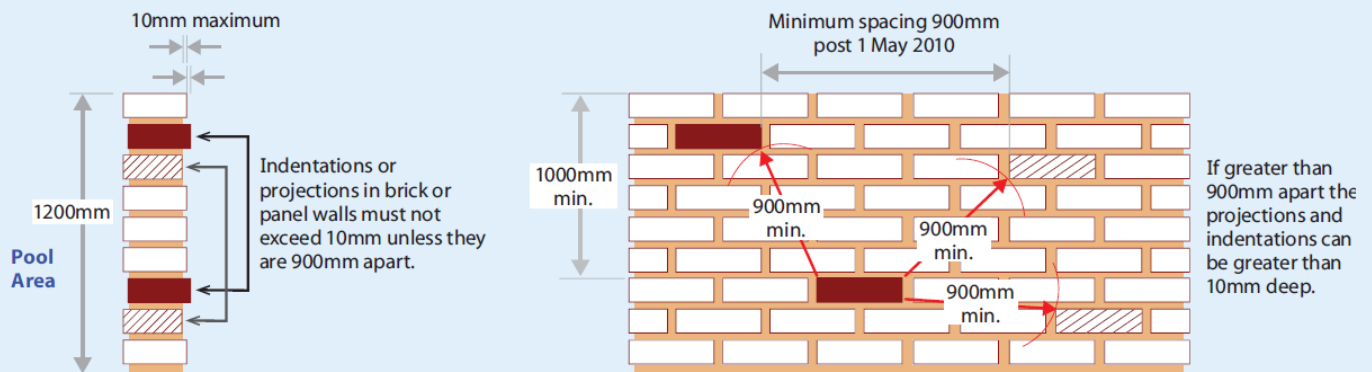


**Sliding Window Forming Part of a Pool Barrier**  
Figure 10



- Gate to swing away from pool area.
- Catch to be shielded.
- Hinges to be non-climbable or 900mm apart.

**Gate and Pool Barriers All Pool Types**  
Figure 2



**Climbing Projections on Brickwork used as Pool Barrier**  
Figure 5

## Additional resources

For more information and resources, such as the Kid Safe Victoria pool safety checklist, please refer to [knox.vic.gov.au/pools](http://knox.vic.gov.au/pools)

### Quick facts

- If a Victorian residential pool or spa has a depth of 30cm or more (300mm), it is required to be surrounded by safety barrier. This includes inflatable pools.
- Placing a cover or lid over a swimming pool or spa does not comply and is not acceptable. A safety barrier is required.
- Safety barriers must be a minimum of 1.2 metres high.
- Barrier gates must be self-closing and self-latching.
- It is illegal to leave a pool or spa gate, or any door or window leading to a pool, propped open.
- Climbable objects such as pot plants, eskies, pool pumps and chairs must be moved away from the barrier.
- A building permit is required to install a swimming pool or spa and safety fence and barriers.
- A swimming pool or spa must not be filled until the pool barrier is completed and approved by the Relevant Building Surveyor.
- A Swimming Pool capable of containing a water level of less than 300mm and that is emptied after each use does not require a pool barrier.