



ACT
Government

Swimming pool safety barrier requirements for residential swimming pools and spas in the ACT are changing.

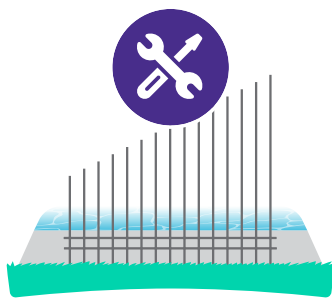
From 1 May 2028 all residential swimming pools and spas in the ACT must have a pool safety barrier compliant with prescribed safety standards.

Pools built between 1972 and 1979

New legislation means that the safety barrier around your swimming pool and spa will need to meet new prescribed safety standards. These safety standards are the requirements in the 2022 version of the Building Code of Australia (BCA), incorporating Australian Standards AS 1926.1 (2012) – *Swimming Pool Safety Part 1: Safety barriers for swimming pools* and AS 1926.2 (2007) – *Swimming Pool Safety Part 2: Location of safety barriers for swimming pools*.

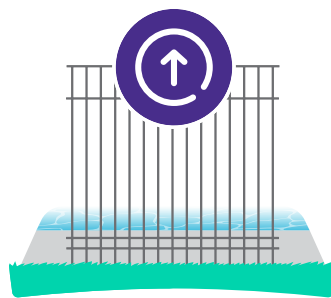
What does this mean for me?

It means that if you have a swimming pool or spa you will have to:



install a pool safety barrier if you do not already have one; or

OR



upgrade your existing pool safety barrier to comply with the prescribed safety standards; and

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obtain a compliance certificate for the new or upgraded pool safety barrier and lodge this with Government within 30 days of it being issued (and before 1 May 2028) or apply for a Ministerial exemption.

What changes will I have to make?

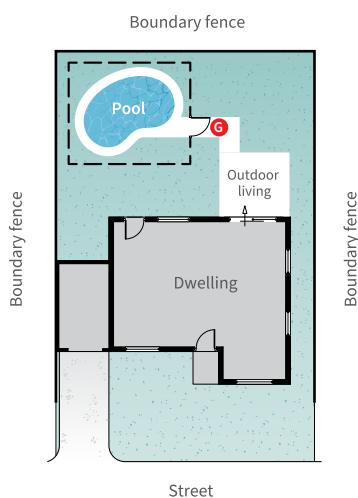
The required changes will depend on the type of safety barrier that is currently in place and the location of the swimming pool or spa in relation to other buildings, structures and boundary fences on the property. For swimming pools and spas for which approvals were issued, or that were built or installed between 1972 and 1979, those requirements were set out in the *Building Act 1972* and the *Building Manual* in force at the time.

The types of changes you will likely need to make for your pool safety barrier to be compliant with the prescribed safety standards are:

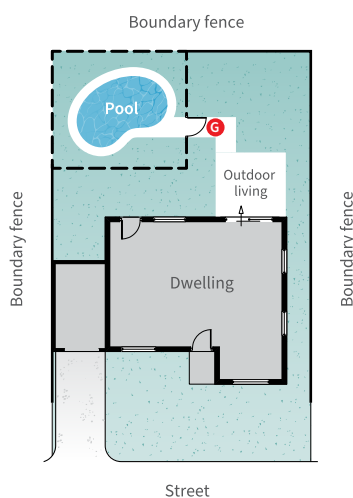
1972-1979 requirements	Changes required to meet the prescribed safety standards
No barrier requirements for pools that were: • above ground with a capacity of 250 cubic feet or less; • indoor; or • not permanent.	If your swimming pool or spa has a depth of more than 300mm it must have a compliant barrier.
Fence height requirement was 3 feet 6 inches (1.07m).	The barrier must be 1200mm in height or 1800mm if the boundary fence forms part of the barrier.
No separate provisions for spa barriers other than the standard barrier requirement.	A spa need not have a fence type of barrier around it if it has a child-resistant lockable structure, such as a door, lid, grille or mesh that meets requirements for construction, fastenings and openings.
No requirements regarding climbability of fence.	The barrier must be non-climbable. There also must be a non-climbable zone around the pool area to prevent climbing. The non-climbable zone requirements are detailed in the standard and include: • 4 non-climbable zones, each with different requirements • Separate requirements where the boundary fence forms part of the pool barrier • Separate requirements where parts of the barrier intersect.
Any gate was to be self-closing and self-latching	Gates must: • swing outward; • have a latch that cannot be adjusted or locked; • have a latch mechanism positioned either 1500mm from the ground or shielded so children cannot access it; and • contain an approved form of gate unit.
No requirements for construction of fence or its composition.	The barrier must be sufficiently strong as to meet specific requirements for strength and durability set out in the standard.
No requirements for windows in buildings that form part of the barrier where the window opens into the pool area.	Windows opening into a pool area that are less than 1800mm in height (from the floor) must be: • covered by bars or a screen; or • fixed to remain closed; or • only openable to 100mm.
No requirements for balconies which project over the pool area.	A balcony balustrade that protrudes into the non-climbable zone must comply with the non-climbable zone requirements.
A wall in a building which includes a door was permitted to form part of a pool barrier, so long as the door is self-closing and self-latching.	A door cannot be located in a pool barrier, except where it provides access to indoor pools or the indoor part of an indoor/outdoor pool. This means that the wall of a building can't be used as part of a pool barrier for an outdoor pool if that wall has a door in it (such as the back door of an adjacent house). Where a door is used for an indoor pool, the child-resistance requirements are: • the release for latching device must be on the outside of the door; • the door can't open toward the pool; and • there is a non-climbable zone outside the door.
No provisions around how the standards applied to above ground pools.	The walls of an above ground pool will be an effective barrier if: • they are factory fabricated and designed for assembly and installation on site, including inflatable pools; • they are at least 1200mm in height from the outside; and • otherwise meet non-climbability and construction requirements for barriers In addition to the height requirements, there must be a barrier around any permanent ladders and access points for permanent ladders.
No specific requirements for glass panel infill barriers beyond the general requirements for all barriers.	If the barrier includes any glass panel infill, the barriers must meet structural strength requirements and glass panels must comply with AS 1288 as to composition of the glass.

Examples of compliant pool safety barriers:

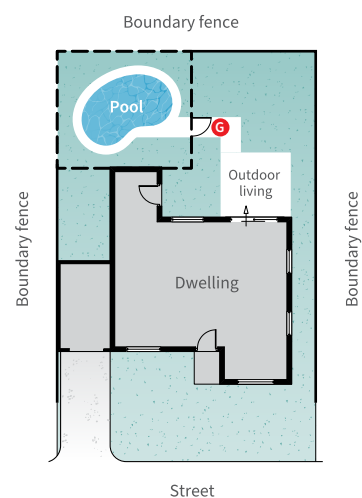
Example 1



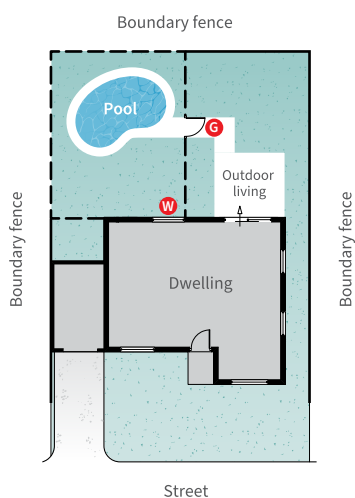
Example 2



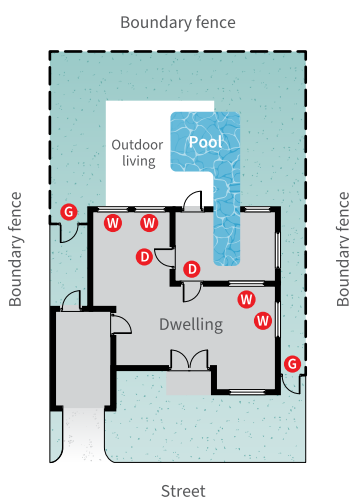
Example 3



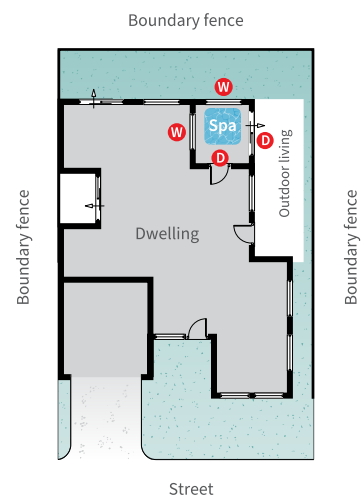
Example 4



Example 5



Example 6



Legend

G Gate complying with AS 1926.1

D Child-resistant doorset complying with AS 1926.1

W Child-resistant openable window complying with AS 1926.1

Openable window NOT complying with AS 1926.1

Sliding door NOT complying with AS 1926.1

Fence, retaining wall or other such barrier complying with AS 1926.1

Wall of dwelling with no openings

Diagrams for Barriers and Gates based on figures from AS 1926.1-2012. © Standards Australia Limited

*This factsheet sets out a summary of the main differences between the requirements applicable between 1972-1979 and the prescribed safety standards. The changes you are required to make to your pool barrier will depend on the exact date on which your pool was built, how it is located on the property and whether any changes have been made since it was first built. You should obtain technical advice to confirm exactly what is required to bring it into compliance with the prescribed safety standards.