Pool Design Checklist

General information only. Costs vary; get written estimates from licensed contractors. Your Pool Renovation is a free referral service.

1. How you will use it

[ ] Main uses: laps, lounging, kids, entertaining, exercise
[ ] Who swims: ages, swimming ability, any diving
[ ] Year-round or seasonal use (affects heating choice)

2. Shape and size

[ ] Yard space left for decking, equipment, fencing and setbacks
[ ] Shape: rectangle/oval (typically lowest cost per HomeGuide) or custom
[ ] Size target (HomeGuide: average inground pool about 300-400 sq ft)
[ ] Cover compatibility with the shape

3. Depth

[ ] Shallow area / sun shelf / beach entry
[ ] Deep end (HomeGuide: average 6-7 ft; diving may need 9 ft+)
[ ] Steps, benches and entry points

4. Safety (CA Health & Safety Code 115922)

[ ] At least 2 of 7 approved drowning-prevention features chosen
[ ] Not relying on a pairing the law excludes (e.g., safety cover + pool alarm)
[ ] Gate/door latches self-closing and self-latching
[ ] Features inspected before final approval

5. Finish

[ ] Plaster, quartz, pebble or tile chosen
[ ] Lifespan and texture compared (see written estimate)

6. Equipment

[ ] Variable-speed pump (CA Title 20 rules for replacement motors 0.5 hp+)
[ ] Filter type: sand, cartridge or DE
[ ] Heating: gas, heat pump, solar or none
[ ] Sanitizer: chlorine or salt system
[ ] Automation and LED lighting

7. Decking and features

[ ] Decking material and square footage
[ ] Lighting, water features, spa, shade, seating

8. Permits and contract

[ ] Building permit from city or county building department

[ ] CSLB license verified (C-53 or qualifying classification)
[ ] Written contract with payment schedule tied to completed work
[ ] Down payment within CA limits
[ ] Notice to Owner (lien) received
[ ] 2-3 written estimates for the same scope

Sources: CA Health & Safety Code 115922 (leginfo.legislature.ca.gov); CA Energy Commission Title 20 pool pump FAQ (energy.ca.gov); CSLB Before Swimming Pool Construction; HomeGuide Inground Pool Cost. yourpoolrenovation.com