

Valley Pond Rules and Policies

General

- The pond is open each year to summer members from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend during certain hours depending on when sunset occurs; check the [Hours](#) page for details. For insurance reasons, the pond may not be used after hours by anyone during the season.
- All visitors are required to sign in when they arrive, and to sign in any guests by first name. To visit the pond, you must be a shareholder who has paid their summer dues, or a guest who is attending with, and is signed in by, a summer member.
- The pond is staffed with a waterfront director and lifeguards during hours of operation. The lifeguards are responsible for enforcing these rules and they have the right to expect the full cooperation of all members and their guests. Additional specific rules for the pond may be established by the waterfront director to govern the day-to-day use of the pond and the behavior of users. Safe activities that are considerate of other peoples' use and enjoyment of the pond are expected at all times of all members and their guests.
- Failure to comply with these rules or the directions of the lifeguards are grounds for the immediate removal of a member and the member's household and guests from the pond, and may result in the suspension of a member's membership rights, or such other measures as the Board of Directors may determine to be appropriate. Anyone disagreeing with the decisions or directions of the lifeguards should nonetheless abide by them, but if aggrieved, they may raise the issue with the board afterwards.
- Any member concerns about the Valley Pond operations should be expressed to a member of the board, not to the pond staff.
- All members should know the location of the emergency telephone on a tree at the lifeguard station near the path from the beach to the bathhouse.
- Adult members are responsible for the supervision and conduct of minors, whether they are their own children or those of their guests. Members with children should familiarize themselves with the special rules for children (see below). Members are responsible for the behavior of their au pairs and sitters.
- The lifeguards' weather warnings are to be heeded immediately. Specifically, when there is a threat of violent weather, the pond will be officially closed and will remain

closed until at least 30 minutes after the threatening weather has passed.

- Charcoal grills are available to all near the large rocks by the volleyball field. Coals should be discarded in the boating pond away from the dock.
 - Picnickers have priority use of the picnic tables.
 - Small amounts of rubbish can be placed in the receptacles provided. Party hosts are asked to remove their own trash from the premises.
 - Off-season access to the Valley Pond property for those households registered the prior summer is available at the discretion of the board.
 - Private property at the pond is left there at your own risk.
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Joining Valley Pond

To become a member of Valley Pond entitled to visit any time during the season, you must do two things:

1. Purchase a share in the Valley Pond Corporation for a total fee of \$5,000. This comprises a \$2,500 share fee, which you may redeem for the purchase price at any time, and a nonrefundable capital maintenance fee of \$2,500. Unless your shareholder parent transfers their share to you, or you live in Brown's Wood (see below), you must join the waiting list to buy a share (see "Waiting List" below). The current wait time is about three years.
- Sign up at the start of each season for summer membership. Shareholders may sign up only themselves and members of their physical household as summer members. Every household member who visits the pond (including infants of any age and au pairs) must be registered summer members.

After submitting the online [Summer Registration Form](#), you'll get an invoice that you can pay by credit card, debit card or bank transfer. The fees for 2024 are as follows:

- \$340 for the first household member, plus
- \$250 for the next household member, plus
- \$155 for each additional household member or au pair (all au pairs must be registered)

Shareholders who do not pay annual membership fees are entitled to a maximum of three free visits per season. For example, the shareholder may make a single visit accompanied by two other household members, or three separate visits alone. If there are four or more visits of this type under a single share, the shareholder will be billed for a single summer membership, and they may not visit again until that membership fee and any other applicable charges are paid in full.

Shareholders who do not pay annual member fees may not bring guests (e.g., anyone who is not a household member).

Late payments and delinquency

Any shareholder who has not paid any accrued fees from the previous season or who has not paid in full for summer membership(s) for the current season will not be permitted to use the pond until all outstanding balances are paid in full. The board will attempt to contact the shareholder using the email and phone information we have on file about delinquent balances and penalties for nonpayment. If a balance remains unpaid after 12 months, the share will be liquidated and the share purchase price (minus the outstanding balance) will be sent to the former shareholder.

Shareholders with an outstanding balance may not transfer their share to anyone. If they wish to redeem their share, the unpaid amount will be deducted from the refunded purchase price.

Children

The rules of the pond pertain to all children at the pond, whether family members or guests. Members should apprise guests of the rules.

- Swim diapers are required for children who are not toilet-trained. Please limit rinsing of babies to the bathhouse. This is important for maintaining healthy water conditions.
- Au pairs and sitters may supervise a maximum of two children in the roped-off shallow water area.
- Children who have not passed the Red Tag test (see below) must be accompanied by an adult in the water whenever they are in the swimming pond beyond the roped-off shallow area.
- Children under 12 must be closely watched at all times and locations while at the pond. They must be accompanied by adult members or by a member's children, au pairs or

sitters 16 years or older.

- To attend the pond independently, children must be 12 years old, pass the Blue Tag test (see below), and have their parents make arrangements with the lifeguard on their first “solo” visit.

Swimming pond and beach

- Shallow diving only is permitted from the various swimming docks. Deep diving is dangerous because the swimming pond’s maximum depth is less than eight feet.
- When the swimming pond is crowded, the lifeguards may order all water toys out of the water.
- No eating or drinking is permitted on the sandy beach. Eating and drinking should be done on the grassy area in the vicinity of the picnic tables.
- No dogs are allowed in the pond, beach or picnic areas, either during the season and off-season. This is important for maintaining healthy water conditions and is required by our original agreement with the Cambridge water system.
- No all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), minibikes or any off-road motorized vehicles are allowed on Valley Pond property, either during the season or off-season.
- If you cannot get into the swim pond without assistance, we ask that you swim with a buddy/partner.

Swim areas and tests

The swimming pond is divided into the shallow water area inside the floating line, the Red Tag area between the floating line and the first dock, the lap lane area and the open water area. The open water and lap lane areas are open only to adults and to children who have passed the White Tag or Blue Tag test, unless they are accompanied in the water by a parent.

To qualify for the **Red Tag**, which grants shallow-water and Red Tag area privileges, children must:

1. Swim 50 yards continuously
2. Tread water for one minute

3. Back-float for one minute

Red tag privileges are good for one season.

To qualify for the **White Tag**, which grants open water and lap lane area privileges, children must:

1. Perform a deep water swim of about 130 yards as specified by the lifeguards
2. Back-float for one minute
3. Tread water for two minutes
4. Do a standing front dive
5. Swim under water the length of the raft

White tag privileges are good for one season.

To qualify for the **Blue Tag**, which grants pond visitation without an adult or caretaker, children must:

1. Be at least 12 years of age
2. Swim 500 yards continuously (four times around the perimeter of the swimming pond)
3. Tread water for five minutes
4. Don a life jacket while in the water
5. Correctly answer five questions about boating safety.

Once children have passed the blue tag test, they need not take it again.

Boating pond

- No swimming is permitted in the boating pond.
- All boaters must have a lifejacket, and all boaters under 16 must wear their life jackets at all times in boats.
- No powerboats of any description are allowed on the boating pond.
- No planting, landscaping, cutting or pruning of vegetation along the boating pond is permitted.
- Members may not go ashore or use the docks on private property around the pond.

- Owners of property abutting the boating pond who are members and pay their annual membership dues may use private docks for personal recreation, subject to the following conditions:
 - No new docks and no expansion, alteration or reconstruction of existing docks may be made without the board's approval.
 - All necessary permits and approvals are obtained and complied with, including the approval of the Conservation Commission.
 - All docks are kept in good condition and in compliance with all laws.
 - No more than one dock is permitted for any property.
 - No boats may be moored at the docks.
 - All use of the boating pond from private docks, and all use of the docks is at the sole risk of the property owner.
 - Summer members may fish in the boating pond. Guests must fish with a summer member. There is a catch-and-release policy from September 1 through May 14. The period from May 15 through August 31 is catch-and-keep season, with a daily limit of three fish per person.
 - No dogs are allowed in the boating pond or frog pond.
 - Children must be accompanied by adults and wear a lifejacket when on the dock. Children who have passed the White Tag test may use the boats and dock without an adult, but responsibility for their supervision remains with the adult.
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Guests and parties

- Only summer members (shareholders who have paid dues for that season) have guest and party privileges. All persons who are not summer members are considered guests.
- Guests must always be accompanied by a summer member. The shareholder will be invoiced in September for accrued guest fees.
- If you plan to bring more than seven guests at a time, you must fill out a [Party Request Form](#) in advance to ensure there is sufficient coverage and capacity that day. If you request a party and then cancel after it's approved for any reason other than bad weather, you will be charged \$25.

Guest fees are as follows:

- \$10 per person per day on Mondays through Thursdays

- \$15 per person per day on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays
- To discourage overcrowding, guest fees double beginning with the member's 26th guest of the season unless the shareholder has two fully paid memberships.
- Guests must be accompanied to the pond by a member each time they visit.

Special events

Once or twice a year, the pond may announce and host a musical guest for an hour or two before the pond closes for the evening. Summer members and their paid guests are welcome as usual. Other special events may be announced by the board to summer members via email, with individual policies and conditions determined by the board.

Off-season access

Valley Pond is closed from the end of Labor Day until the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. During this time, the gate is locked with a combination padlock. Shareholders who were summer members the previous year and who are in good standing with Valley Pond may have access to the pond during the off-season if they abide by certain conditions. The following agreement must be signed by those seeking such access.

It is essential to continue to follow the rules during the off-season. Off-season access is an added privilege, not a right. If the rules are not followed, the pond may be placed in legal jeopardy and off-season access may be rescinded for everyone.

Responsibilities and liabilities

Those to whom the combination is issued (“recipients”) acknowledge their awareness that during the off-season period, there are hazards present at Valley Pond and safety measures are absent. These conditions include but are not limited to:

- There are no lifeguards on duty.
- Water quality will not be monitored.
- The bathrooms will not be available, and trash will not be collected.

Recipients individually assume full legal and personal responsibility for their own safety and security while on the pond premises. They agree to release and hold harmless Valley Pond Corporation, its officers, directors, employees and stockholders as well as their representative heirs, representatives and assigns from and against any claim or liability whatsoever with

respect to any injury or other loss or damage which may be incurred or suffered while on Valley Pond premises. Further, they agree to be held personally liable for any damages to Valley Pond facilities resulting from their actions or inactions while on the premises.

Recipients are fully responsible for the following:

- Removing all trash and anything else you bring with them.
- Closely supervising all children — there are no lifeguards or staff.

No dogs are allowed anywhere on Valley Pond premises at any time of year. This is important for maintaining healthy water conditions and is required by our original agreement with the Cambridge water system.

The lock combination is only to be disclosed to the summer member, and with the condition that they do not disclose it further. The combination is not to be shared with non-members. If access is abused, the combination will be changed immediately and not reissued to anyone.

Share purchases and transfers

The board has developed policies and procedures on a number of different pond share ownership issues. These policies may be updated, changed or discontinued at any time by the board. Please see a board member for more information on these policies.

Terminology:

- A **shareholder** is a person or couple who have completed a one-time purchase of a share in the Valley Pond Corporation and is therefore entitled to pay summer membership fees for themselves and other household members and then visit the pond whenever they like during the summer. Shareholders who do not purchase summer memberships are entitled to only three free visits to the pond per year and are not entitled to request off-season access to the pond.
- A **summer member** is a shareholder who has registered and paid annual fees for using the pond in a given summer.

Waiting list

Each year, depending on the pond's usage level during the previous season and staff capacity, the board will invite an appropriate number of people whose names are on the waiting list to purchase a share in the Valley Pond Corporation. In practice, some people whose names rise to the top are no longer interested in purchasing a share. To get on the waiting list, please

complete this [Waitlist Registration Form](#). Shortly after receipt of the form information, the clerk will email you to let you know where you stand on the list.

Redeeming shares

Shares may not be sold or transferred except to the adult children of shareholders (see below), but they can be sold back to the Corporation for the price originally paid for the share, excluding the non-refundable capital maintenance charge and summer membership fees. Shareholders who no longer use the pond are encouraged to turn in their shares to permit new families to become members. To redeem a share, email valleypond.clerk@gmail.com.

Transfers to children and siblings

The board has established a policy permitting shareholders to transfer their share to an adult child or to a sibling. This transfer lets the child or sibling and his/her own family to become summer members immediately. The former shareholder may then visit the pond as an accompanied and paid guest of their adult child or sibling. A fee of \$250 is required to transfer a share to a shareholder's adult child or sibling.

Children or siblings who accept the transfer of a share and reside in Lincoln or Weston can also, in turn, transfer that share to a sibling or child. A \$500 fee is assessed for that second transfer. Children and siblings who do not reside in Lincoln or Weston cannot be second-order recipients of transferred shares; a share may be transferred a maximum of two times.

To transfer a share, email valleypond.clerk@gmail.com.

Brown's Wood

Brown's Wood is a neighborhood of homes abutting the Valley Pond property where many of the original pond founders lived. Owners of Brown's Wood shares are subject to the Brown's Wood Share Agreement, which provides that their shares cannot be redeemed and will "run with the land," such that when a Brown's Wood property owner moves, his or her share transfers to the new owner. Brown's Wood owners who move may then buy a new share for themselves immediately at the usual price without joining the waiting list. Brown's Wood owners who move may become shareholders again by contacting the Valley Pond Clerk (valleypond.clerk@gmail.com) and asking to purchase a new share.

Divorce

The board has established policies to address some of the issues that may arise in the case of the divorce of a couple who jointly hold a share in the Valley Pond Corporation. Once a couple who jointly own a share in the Valley Pond Corporation are divorced, they are no longer considered a single family for the purposes of summer membership, and they cannot both

register for summer membership at the pond. The share (and the summer membership rights that go with it) must be transferred to one or the other of the divorcing couple individually. If this is not done or there is a disagreement as to the share's new individual owner, the board reserves the right to withhold summer membership from either or both parties until a transfer is completed.

Alternatively, the couple may decide to transfer their share to one of their adult children under the Transfers to Children and Siblings policy (see above). This will permit either parent to come as a guest of the family of the shareholder child (however, other children will only be able to use the pond as guests of their shareholder sibling). The ex-spouse without a share may come to the pond as a guest if accompanied by the new shareholder or registered family member.

In some cases, the spouse who does not end up as the shareholder after the divorce may wish to make independent arrangements for continued use of the pond. In that case, he or she may purchase a new share.