



# Triple Handcrafted “Basalt” Column Fountain Kit Installation Manual



For Use With GFRC Handcrafted  
Single or Triple Rock Kits  
on an Achelous Basin

# INCLUDED in this kit:

Blue Thumb makes installation of your **Handcrafted GFRC Fountain Bubbler Rock Kit** easy by following these instructions.

Subscribe to our YouTube channel, **BlueThumbINC**, for related informational videos.



## Tools necessary for installation:

- Scissors or utility knife
- Shovel
- Tamp or Rake
- Level
- Marker paint (optional)

**IMPORTANT: WHEN UNBOXING, MOVING, OR INSTALLING YOUR GFRC FOUNTAIN(S) DO NOT LIFT OR CARRY BY THE HOSE UNION ASSEMBLY THAT EXTENDS INSIDE THE FOUNTAIN(S).**



## STEP 1

### Choose Location for Basin

**1a** Locate your fountain near your preferred viewing area where both water and electricity services are accessible. Be certain to avoid underground utilities.

**1b** Clear the area and prepare to excavate by tracing the fountain basin using marking paint.

**IMPORTANT: BEFORE EXCAVATION BEGINS BE SURE TO CALL MISS DIG OR YOUR UTILITY COMPANY.**



## STEP 2 Excavation of Basin Area



2a



2b

**2a** Using a shovel dig 90 degrees into the ground, slightly wider and just as deep as the fountain basin making sure to remove any sharp rocks or roots.

**2b NOTE:** If installing a splash apron, make sure the basin is about 2" below grade, allowing you to slope the surrounding terrain toward the basin.

**IMPORTANT** Level the bottom of the hole across the entire basin, add sand or small gravel if needed. **Tamp** to ensure no settling occurs after installation. Check again to make sure the center is level with the edges.



Level



Tamp

## STEP 3a Set Basin in Place

Position the basin within the hole. Make sure the pump opening in the grate is orientated near electrical service.

If installing the splash apron, set basin in the hole and verify that the basin top is level and approximately 2" below grade.



3a

## STEP 3b Level

Using a level, ensure the fountain basin remains level side to side. **The basin should sit solidly on the compacted and leveled ground below.** Hanging the lip of the basin on the surface can cause the basin center to buckle.



3b



### Optional Auto Fill Kit Install

If an Auto Fill Kit is being incorporated, you may bury your water supply line and make any Auto Fill connections at this time.



Item: #ABDAUTO

## STEP 4 Backfill

Backfill around the box and soil using excavated soil or self-compacting material, such as sand or pea gravel. When using excavated soil be sure to regularly compact with a tamper.

If your basin included a cardboard cover leave it in place while you backfill to prevent soil from falling into the basin.

**Note:** The more solid the soil is around and below the reservoir, the less shifting over time from settling and rain.



4



**IMPORTANT:** Once Achelous Basin is in place, clean basin area of any loose dirt.

Remove cardboard and vacuum out any dirt that may have fallen into the basin then wipe clean before adding water. Keep that pump happy with a clean basin full of clear water!

**You may fill your basin with clean water at this point to stabilize the basin, or you may wait until your fountains are in place.**



## Grate Orientation

The two halves of the grate may look nearly identical on the top and bottom, but be sure to identify the top side, which features a lip where the Pump Access Cover rests. The grate halves are designed to meet over two support columns, ensuring maximum strength. An additional PVC center support may be included for added stability.



## STEP 5 Fountain Placement

If helpful, you may place grates and temporarily set fountains. The fountains can be as close together or as far apart as you like.

We recommend a “Y” pattern using the elongated holes for best strength and stability.



6-foot Flex Hoses  
Connect to this  
Discharge Assembly

3-split valve  
Manifold on a  
Mag-Drive  
Pump

## STEP 6 Basin Screen Prep

Lay the screen over the basin grates and cut holes in the screen according to your fountain positioning.

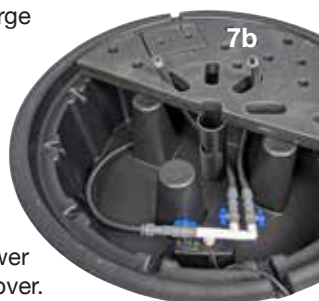


## STEP 7 Pump Plumbing

For ease of installation, the plumbing assembly will be complete. A Pump Discharge Assembly 3-split valve manifold comes attached to the Pump. If not attached, gently turn manifold 1 to 3 turns. Do not over tighten.

**7a** Attach hoses to the discharge assembly with the un-notched connector end.

**7b** Set Pump Assembly under the Pump Access, then place the PVC Center Support Column in the center of the basin taking care not to bind the hoses. Run the pump power cord up through the access cover.



The notched end of the hose is designed to attach to the rock and allow passage for a lighting cord. If you are installing the fountain without a light kit, simply thread this notched end into the hose union inside the fountain—it will not cause any issues.



## STEP 8 Place Basin Grates

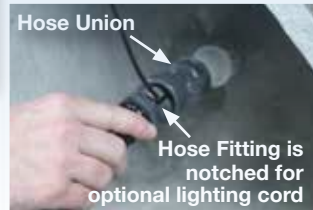
Place both grates on the basin threading the notched end of the hoses through the basin holes and matched cut polymesh screen as determined in Steps 5 and 6.

### If Installing Lighting...

**Lighting Add-On:** If installing the optional Plume Light Kit (item# PB2903) the **Plume Insert** is replaced by the **Light Body**.

#### Note on Lights:

The **Plume Insert** is removed for **Light** placement. The male thread on the hose is notched for the light electric cord to pass through. Detailed lighting installation instructions are included with Plume Light Kit purchase.



## STEP 9

### Attach the Bubbler Rock(s)

Set the bubbler rock on the basin near the designated protruding hose. Tilt the rock on its edge and hand-tighten the hose to the union assembly located on the underside of the rock.

**Caution:** Some taller columns contain a long internal extension tube. Mishandling may damage this component. Handle with care during installation.

Carefully stand the rock upright while keeping the flex hose from binding where it extends through the grate.

Repeat for remaining bubbler rocks.

Gently adjust the placement of rocks to your liking.





## STEP 10

### Fill your Basin and Turn on your Pump

If you haven't don so already, fill the basin reservoir with water. The water level should be at or near the bottom of the grate. Check and adjust the water level periodically.

Turn on the pump by plugging it into a grounded GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) 110 volt electrical outlet.

You may plug the pump into any outdoor rated timer (not included) if you wish to only have the fountain running during certain hours of the day.



## STEP 11

### Water Flow Control

**8a** To achieve the desired sound and aesthetic flow, adjust the rate of water to each of your bubblers by turning each of the ball valves using the red or blue keys on your pump discharge assembly.



**8b** A Plume Insert has been pre-installed in the fountain to adjust water pressure. It compresses the water flow to create a more dramatic plume effect for this kit, while also allowing for easy installation of optional plume lighting — which offers a similar enhancement.



## STEP 12

### Finishing Touches

Your fountain is now ready for the final touches of landscape design. Start by covering your polymesh screen with river rock or other decorative rock products. There are many styles and colors available, and these can be found at any rock yard or garden center.

Avoid placing soil or mulch on top of the screen as it may fall through the screen and clog your pump. Use landscape plants to decorate around your basin completing the look.

**ENJOY and SHARE!**



# FOUNTAIN CARE AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

## Tips to keep your bubbler rocks looking great!

Our GFRC (Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete) bubblers are designed to provide years of enjoyment, with minimal care or maintenance required. Because they are made of concrete, they are very rugged and will withstand the elements without color fade or discoloration common in inferior faux stones.

### Cleaning - Dirt spots

GFRC rocks will age in a very similar manner as natural stones. If you need to clean the rocks, a good blast from a garden hose will usually work, although mild soap and a soft-bristle brush can be used as well.

### Cleaning - Algae and moss

Over time, moss and algae may develop on your rock, just as it would on natural stone. The time it takes will depend on how often you have your fountain turned on, how much shade or sunlight it gets, and how often fresh water is added to the fountain base. If your rock is accumulating more moss or algae than you desire we recommend using Algae D-Solv® and a soft bristle brush to reduce moss/algae growth.



Scan the QR code  
for a quick video  
demonstration on  
how easy it is to  
clean your rock  
fountain!

### Efflorescence - Causes and cleaning / removal

Efflorescence is caused when soluble salts and other water materials come to the surface of concrete and mortar. Most often, efflorescence will be minor, and can manifest itself in a couple of ways - either as a powdery, fluffy substance, which is brushed off with a nylon-bristle scrub brush, or as a crystallized deposit on the rock.

To keep efflorescence to a minimum, run your bubbler non-stop for three to four weeks after first installing the fountain. **If efflorescence appears, do not let it dry!** While it is wet, scrub the area with the nylon-bristle brush, until the efflorescence is gone. This may need to be repeated until all the salt has been worked out of the rock. The key is to not let any efflorescence dry! If the efflorescence has been allowed to dry and has attached itself to the rock, then an efflorescence remover (such as Techni-Seal), is recommended. Even with that, some staining or efflorescence may remain which is why rocks should not be allowed to dry until any efflorescence has been worked out of the rocks.

### Pump service and maintenance

Periodically inspect and clean the pre-filter. To clean, remove pre-filter from the water pump and rinse using clean water. Replace the pre-filter if it becomes damaged or torn.

The cap over the impeller should occasionally be removed to clean and inspect the impeller assembly. The impeller is the only serviceable item and can be pulled out of the pump body. **Do not take the impeller apart.** If it is worn or broken, the entire impeller assembly should be replaced. This will restore the pump to its original functionality. Pumps taken out of service for an extended period with fluid inside run the risk of forming a crust, which may prevent subsequent starting. Saltwater should be flushed out with fresh water. Always check the electrical cord for sharp bends, which can cause premature cracking. **Do not use the power cord to lift or move the pump.**

Go to [www.shopbluethumb.com](http://www.shopbluethumb.com) for additional information and tutorial videos.





Dappled Gray



Auto Fill Kit  
#ABDAUTO



Muck Buster®  
#PB2682



Algae D-Solv®  
#PB2002

# Maintenance

## General Fountain and System Maintenance

- It is OK to run pump continuously 24/7, or you may choose to connect it to a timer.
- Regularly check the water level in the basin. Never allow the water to drop below the pump, as this can lead to pump failure.
- Fill evaporated water as necessary or considering installing an Auto Fill Kit #ABDAUTO.
- Add Muck Buster® #PB2682 every couple of weeks to the basin to ensure muck doesn't build-up over time and clog the pump. 3 tablets treat 500 gallons of water.
- If algae forms on the rock columns, brush off and use CrystalClear® Algae D-Solv® #PB2002 to quickly clear organic debris and remove odors. 1 ounce treats 360 gallons. You may also use a soft bristle brush to clean algae off of the columns.

## Winterizing:

- If you live in a climate that experiences prolonged freezing conditions, we recommend removing the pump from the basin when temperatures begin to drop below freezing. To remove the pump, disconnect from the valve/manifold assembly. Place the pump in a bucket of water in a temperature controlled atmosphere (above freezing). This prevents the pump seals from drying out.
- **Do not drain the basin during the winter months.** Allow the water to freeze in the basin so that the ground doesn't cause the basin to rise or "pop up" from expansion of the freezing soil around it. Leave basin 50% full of water.
- Our GFRC Fountains are manufactured to withstand freezing conditions and may be left outside during the winter months if you choose. There is no need to cover the Fountains, but you may do so if you desire, patio furniture covers work well.

## Spring Start-Up:

- Once everything has thawed in the spring we recommend draining the water in the basin and replacing it with fresh, clean water. A wet/dry vacuum works well for removing water and accumulated debris.
- Reconnect the pump and plug it in.
- Add Muck Buster® to remove any remaining muck that was not able to be removed manually.

If you need replacement parts please contact us directly at **888-619-3474** or email us at **sales@bluethumbponds.com**.

Now, snap a picture of your completed waterfall and post it to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/bluethumbinc](https://facebook.com/bluethumbinc)!

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