

# How to Fix Hot Tub Air Lock



It's a common scenario. You've just spent HOURS draining, cleaning and re-filling your hot tub, and you're ready to take a soak. You turn on the jets, and although you can hear the spa pump motor running, no water is coming out of the jets. You may even notice an error code popping up on the display. It's a dead giveaway - you have an air locked hot tub.

## What is Hot Tub Air Lock?

Hot tub air lock happens when air gets trapped inside the plumbing, and the circulation pump is unable to prime. This keeps water from flowing through the water lines, preventing the pump(s), heater and jets from working normally.

Anytime a hot tub is [drained for regular cleaning](#) and maintenance, it's easy for air to get trapped in the lines. But not to worry! Whenever hot tub air lock symptoms are noticed, it's usually pretty easy to fix.

## How to Fix Hot Tub Air Lock

There are a couple of easy methods you can use to eliminate air lock in your spa or hot tub. Before you get started, make sure the heater is either turned off or the temperature setting has been turned all the way down. If the heater kicks on while you're purging the air, it can get damaged from overheating.

It's worth noting that some newer hot tubs and pumps have a designated bleeder valve, which allows for quick and easy air lock elimination. Check the owner's manual to see if your hot tub is equipped with a bleeder valve before trying any other methods.



The first method involves “burping” the air out of the plumbing through the jets. First, make sure all jets are completely open by turning the faceplates counter-clockwise. Next, turn the jets on high for about 10-15 seconds, then turn them off again. Continue turning the jets on and off again, increasing the time by about 10 seconds each time until you see air bubbling out of the jets. When this happens, leave the jets on until the bubbles are gone or the jets are functioning normally. If you don’t see any air bubbles after three on/off cycles, you’ll need to try another method. Otherwise, you can damage your spa pump from allowing it to run dry.



Another method is to remove air from the pump directly. This is actually much simpler than it sounds, and it only requires a screwdriver (to remove cabinet panels) and a set of channel lock pliers (to release the air). First, locate your spa pump, using the owner’s manual if necessary. If there is more than one pump, determine which one(s) is air locked. Remove the appropriate panel from the spa cabinet so you can access the pump, and very slowly loosen the large union nut between the spa plumbing and the motor to release the air. Once the air has finished leaking out, water will start to sputter out, and it will soon become a steady flow of water. When this happens, re-tighten the union. Turn the jets back on to see if the problem was solved. If not, you may need to call in professional help or try troubleshooting other [hot tub jet problems](#).