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The Polaris 280 is a workhorse of the pool cleaning world, known for its robust performance in keeping your pool sparkling clean. However, like any mechanical device, it's not immune to occasional hiccups. A malfunctioning Polaris 280 can quickly turn a pristine oasis into a debris-filled eyesore. This article is your go-to guide for diagnosing and resolving common issues, getting your trusty cleaner back in action with minimal fuss and maximum efficiency.My Polaris 280 Isn't Moving! What's Going On?This is perhaps the most common complaint from Polaris 280 owners. A stationary cleaner is a useless cleaner, so let's get to the bottom of it. Here are the prime suspects:1. Check the Water Flow:The Polaris 280 relies on pressurized water from a booster pump to power its movement. This is absolutely crucial.Is the Booster Pump Running? This might seem obvious, but double-check that the booster pump is actually powered on and running. Look for the humming sound of the motor. If it's not running, check the circuit breaker and any related timers or control systems. A tripped breaker is a common culprit.Is the Water Flow Sufficient? Even if the pump is running, the flow might be restricted. Disconnect the Polaris 280 from the wall fitting and observe the water coming out. It should be a strong, forceful jet. If it's weak or nonexistent, there's a blockage or pump issue.Check the Filter: A dirty pool filter can significantly reduce water flow to the booster pump. Backwash or clean your filter thoroughly and recheck the flow. This is a maintenance step that should be done regularly anyway.2. Inspect the In-Line Filter Screen:Located within the feed hose, this small filter screen prevents debris from entering the Polaris 280. A clogged screen is a frequent cause of reduced or no movement.Locate and Remove the Screen: The in-line filter screen is typically found near the wall fitting or at the Polaris 280 itself. Disconnect the hose and carefully remove the screen.Clean the Screen Thoroughly: Rinse the screen under running water, using a brush to dislodge any stubborn debris. Even small bits of leaves or twigs can restrict flow.Reinstall and Test: Once clean, reassemble the screen and reconnect the hose. Observe if the Polaris 280's movement improves.3. Examine the Drive Train:The drive train is the heart of the Polaris 280's movement. Problems here often require a closer look.Check the Belts: The Polaris 280 uses belts to transfer power to the wheels. Open the top cover and inspect the belts. Are they broken, loose, or worn? If so, they need to be replaced. Replacements are readily available online or at pool supply stores.Inspect the Wheels: Make sure the wheels are rotating freely. Debris can get lodged between the wheels and the frame, hindering movement. Manually rotate the wheels and remove any obstructions.Check the Turbine: The turbine is the rotating mechanism that drives the wheels. Ensure it spins freely. If it's jammed or stiff, disassemble the turbine housing and clean out any debris.4. Don't Forget the Wall Fitting!The wall fitting provides the pressurized water that powers the Polaris 280.Inspect the Fitting: Look for cracks or damage to the fitting itself. A damaged fitting can leak water, reducing the pressure available to the cleaner.Check for Blockages: Debris can accumulate inside the wall fitting, restricting water flow. Try using a small brush or tool to clear any obstructions.Ensure Proper Installation: If the wall fitting is not properly installed, it can cause leaks or reduce pressure. Make sure it's securely connected to the plumbing.My Polaris 280 is Stuck in One Spot!A Polaris 280 that's stuck in one area of the pool is frustrating. Here's how to get it roaming again:1. Hose Length and Configuration:The length and configuration of the feed hose are critical for proper coverage.Is the Hose Too Short? If the hose is too short, the Polaris 280 won't be able to reach all areas of the pool. Add hose sections as needed. The general rule is that the hose should be long enough to reach the farthest point of the pool plus a few feet.Is the Hose Tangled? A tangled hose can severely restrict the Polaris 280's movement. Straighten the hose and consider using a hose swivel to prevent future tangling.Check for Obstructions: The hose might be getting caught on ladders, steps, or other pool features. Reposition the hose or remove the obstruction if possible.2. Thrust Jet Adjustment:The thrust jet is responsible for steering the Polaris 280.Locate the Thrust Jet: The thrust jet is located on the top of the Polaris 280.Adjust the Jet: The direction of the thrust jet determines the direction the Polaris 280 travels. Experiment with different settings to achieve optimal coverage. A slight adjustment can make a big difference.Ensure the Jet is Clear: Debris can clog the thrust jet, affecting its performance. Clean the jet regularly to ensure proper steering.3. Wheel RPM:The wheel RPM (rotations per minute) affects the cleaner's speed and coverage.Check the RPM: Use an RPM gauge to measure the wheel RPM. The ideal RPM will vary depending on the pool size and shape. Consult your Polaris 280 manual for the recommended RPM.Adjust the Pressure Relief Valve: The pressure relief valve controls the water pressure to the turbine, which affects the wheel RPM. Adjust the valve to achieve the desired RPM.Inspect the Pressure Relief Valve: A damaged or malfunctioning pressure relief valve can cause inconsistent RPM. Replace the valve if necessary.My Polaris 280 is Going in Circles!A cleaner spinning endlessly in circles is a common and easily addressed problem.1. Thrust Jet Direction (Again!)This is the most likely culprit. Even a slight misalignment can cause circular motion.Re-evaluate the Jet: Double-check the thrust jet's direction. Small changes can have a significant impact. Try adjusting it in small increments and observing the cleaner's movement.Consider the Pool Shape: The pool's shape can influence the Polaris 280's movement. Adjust the thrust jet to compensate for the pool's contours.2. Hose Swivel Functionality:The hose swivel is designed to prevent tangling, but if it's faulty, it can cause the cleaner to go in circles.Inspect the Swivel: Make sure the swivel is rotating freely. If it's stiff or stuck, lubricate it with a silicone-based lubricant.Replace the Swivel: If lubrication doesn't help, the swivel may need to be replaced.My Polaris 280 is Picking Up Large Debris, But Not Fine Particles!The Polaris 280 is designed to pick up a variety of debris, but it may struggle with fine particles in certain situations.1. Filter Bag Condition:The filter bag is responsible for trapping debris.Inspect the Bag: Make sure the filter bag is clean and free of tears or holes. A damaged bag will allow fine particles to escape.Choose the Right Bag: Polaris offers different types of filter bags for various debris types. Consider using a finer mesh bag for smaller particles.Clean the Bag Regularly: Clean the filter bag after each use to maintain optimal filtration.2. Water Chemistry:Imbalanced water chemistry can affect the Polaris 280's performance.Test Your Water: Test your pool water regularly and adjust the chemicals as needed.Maintain Proper Chemistry: Ensure that your pH, alkalinity, and calcium hardness levels are within the recommended ranges.Consider a Clarifier: If you're struggling with fine particles, consider using a pool clarifier to clump them together for easier removal.My Polaris 280 is Making a Loud Noise!Unusual noises from your Polaris 280 are a sign that something isn't right.1. Debris in the Turbine:This is a common cause of loud noises.Inspect the Turbine: Disassemble the turbine housing and check for debris. Even small pebbles or leaves can cause a racket.Clean Thoroughly: Remove any debris and reassemble the turbine.2. Worn Bearings:Worn bearings in the turbine or wheels can also cause noise.Listen Carefully: Try to pinpoint the source of the noise. If it's coming from the turbine or wheels, the bearings may be worn.Replace the Bearings: Replacing worn bearings is a relatively simple repair that can significantly reduce noise.3. Pump Cavitation:Cavitation occurs when air bubbles form in the pump, causing a loud, rattling noise.Check for Air Leaks: Inspect the pump and plumbing for air leaks.Ensure Proper Water Level: Make sure the water level in the pool is high enough to prevent the pump from sucking in air.Clean the Pump Basket: A clogged pump basket can also cause cavitation.Frequently Asked QuestionsWhy is my Polaris 280 not moving after backwashing? Ensure the valve is completely returned to the "filter" position. Air trapped in the system can also hinder performance. Run the pump for a few minutes to purge any trapped air.How often should I clean the filter bag? Ideally, clean the filter bag after each use to maintain optimal performance and prevent clogs.What's the best way to store my Polaris 280 during the off-season? Rinse it thoroughly, disconnect all hoses, and store it in a dry, protected area. This prevents cracking and deterioration.Can I use my Polaris 280 in a saltwater pool? Yes, the Polaris 280 is generally compatible with saltwater pools, but regular rinsing is crucial to prevent salt buildup and corrosion.Where can I find replacement parts for my Polaris 280? Replacement parts are widely available online through various retailers or at your local pool supply store.ConclusionTroubleshooting a Polaris 280 doesn't have to be a daunting task. By systematically checking the water flow, drive train, hose configuration, and filter bag, you can often diagnose and resolve the issue quickly. Don't hesitate to consult your owner's manual or seek professional help if needed, ensuring your pool stays clean and inviting all season long. Swimming pools require regular vacuuming and other forms of cleaning to stay clean. Automatic pool cleaners such as the Polaris model 280 roll over the sides and bottom of a pool, driven by water pressure from the pump, picking up debris in the process. Like most automatic pool vacuums, the Polaris 280 needs to be correctly adjusted to perform correctly. If your vacuum fails to clean the entire pool, does not climb the walls or moves too slowly, the likelihood is that the device's wheels are not operating at the optimal revolutions per minute. Other operating problems can be caused by a jet nozzle not aimed correctly or a hose that isn't long enough, both of which can be remedied. Here are some simple troubleshooting steps that will keep your Polaris 280 pool vacuum running correctly. Polaris hose Plastic washer Perform regular maintenance on the Polaris 280 weekly, such as emptying the leaf bag and cleaning the wall screen, to ensure the sweep stays in good condition. Shut down water flow to the Polaris 280 and take the device out of the pool. Examine the small plastic jet nozzle on the back end of the cleaner. This nozzle emits a stream of water that pushes the Polaris across the pool. Adjust the direction of the nozzle to influence the overall direction of movement for the Polaris. Normal settings have the nozzle pointing to the 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock positions. Unscrew the nut connecting the Polaris hose to the Polaris body, and pull the hose free. Add more sections of hose to the rest of the hose to extend the Polaris 280's reach. Take away sections of hose to limit the area the sweep covers. A Polaris 280 vacuum needs an optimal wheel speed to cover the entire bottom of the pool and successfully climb the walls. For best efficiency, the Polaris needs to run between 28 and 32 rpm. Follow the procedure for adjusting the wheel rotation: Turn the pump on, then hold the cleaner below water level and count the wheel revolutions for one minute. If the count is less than 28 rpm, increase the speed with one or more of these steps: Check the filter screen in the in-line filter for debris that restricts water flow. Clean the skimmer, filter and pump basket, clearing any debris that restricts water flow. Check the hoses, connections and swivels for leaks that may be lowering water pressure. Remove the blue restrictor disk from the UWF (universal wall fitting). If an adjustable gate valve is installed on the booster pump or cleaner line, open it completely so water can flow freely to the Polaris. If the count is more than 32 RPM, reduce the speed with one or more of these steps: Replace the blue restrictor disk in the UWF with the red restrictor. If the flow is still too high, unscrew the pressure relief valve until the proper rpm is reached. Note: The pressure relief valve should only be adjusted when a restrictor is installed. If an adjustable valve is installed after the booster pump, adjust it to reduce the water flow to the vacuum. Pool Center: Auto Pool Cleaners If your cleaner displays any of the following problems, adjustments may be necessary to restore performance. Problem: Cleaner hangs up on steps or other obstacles for longer than 3 minutes. Solution: 1. Check the wheel RPM (rotations per minute). 2. Verify the back-up valve is cycling. 3. Adjust the thrust jet. 4. Remove unnecessary pool hardware or install a ladder guard kit (Sold at our retail stores). Problem: Cleaner is sluggish, running with less power than normal. Solution: 1. Check the filter screen in the Quick Disconnect and clean, if necessary. 2. Clean the skimmer basket, pump basket, and pool filter. 3. Check all of the hoses, connections, and swivels for leaks that could cause loss of water pressure. 4. Check the wheel RPM. Problem: Cleaner flies around the pool and/or does not make contact with the bottom. Solution: 1. Check the wheel RPM. If more than 32 RPM, unscrew the pressure relief valve to decrease water flow to cleaner. 2. Confirm that the blue restrictor disc is installed in the universal wall fitting (UWF) to decrease water flow, or install the red restrictor disc to decrease water flow even more. 3. Verify that the back-up valve is cycling. Hold the valve out of the water and watch the jet. It should come on and go off approximately every 90 seconds. Problem: Cleaner does not back up. Solution: 1. Verify the back-up valve is cycling. 2. Check the wheel RPM. 3. If the bag is full, empty it. 4. If head float has water in it, replace it. 5. Make sure feed hose is floating. Problem: Cleaner turns only in one direction. Solution: 1. Adjust the thrust jet. 2. Maker sure feed hose is floating. Problem: Feed hose becomes tangled. Solution: 1. Remeasure the hose to verify that it is adjusted to the proper length for the pool shape. 2. With the cleaner operating, check that the connector swivels in hose and rotates freely. 3. Make sure feed hose is floating (may need new floats). 4. With the cleaner turned off, spin each of the wheels. All wheels should turn together. Problem: Sweep hose is sucked into the vacuum tube. Solution: 1. Make sure the opening at the end of the sweep hose is not blocked by the sweep hose scrubber. 2. Adjust the sweep hose flow to a gentle sweeping motion, using the thumb screw. Problem: Sweep hose sprays too much water out of the pool Solution: 1. Adjust the speed of the sweep hose by tightening the adjustment screw. 2. Replace the sweep hose scrubber (Polaris) if it is worn or missing. 3. Add a sweep hose weight to keep the sweep hose from spraying. Problem: The cleaner does not clean the entire pool. Solution: 1. Check that the hose length reaches within 6” of the farthest point of the pool. If not, order a new hose section. 2. Check thrust jet for straight back position that optimizes random turning. 3. While the cleaner is operating, hold it upside down and look into the vacuum tube. There should be two distinct, even jets of water. If there are not, contact your local pool professional for assistance. Problem: The cleaner is running in circles on its side. Solution: 1. Check filter bag. If full, it can weigh the cleaner down on one side. 2. Remove the head float and shake it. If there is water in the float head, buy a new one. 3. Check the hose floats to make sure they are spaced evenly. If none of these solutions work for you, contact your local pool professional. MEMPHIS POOL carries over 20,000 parts in stock, including everything you need to repair your automatic pool cleaner. Related Articles: Manually Vacuuming Your Pool Return To DYI Pool Care Main ➤ I have problems with my Polaris 280 Possible Causes Solutions Hose length is too short Thrust jet is misaligned Water jets are obstructed Ensure hose reaches within 6 inches of the farthest point Adjust the thrust jet position for optimal turning Clean the water jets if obstructed Possible Causes Solutions Full filter bag Waterlogged head float Improper hose float positioning Empty the filter bag Replace or dry the head float Ensure hose floats are evenly spaced Possible Causes Solutions Incorrect wheel RPM Back-up valve malfunction Poor thrust jet adjustment Check wheel RPM (should be 28-32 RPM) Ensure back-up valve is cycling properly Adjust the thrust jet position Possible Causes Solutions Clogged filter screen Debris in skimmer or pump baskets Leaking hoses or connections Clean the filter screen in the in-line filter Clear debris from skimmer and pump baskets Inspect hoses and connections for leaks Possible Causes Solutions Back-up valve is stuck Improper wheel RPM Full filter bag Waterlogged head float Clean or replace the back-up valve Check wheel RPM for proper function Empty the filter bag Replace the head float if necessary Possible Causes Solutions Incorrect restrictor disk installation High wheel RPM Back-up valve not cycling Confirm the correct restrictor disk is installed Reduce water flow by adjusting the pressure relief valve Check the back-up valve cycling Possible Causes Solutions Improper hose length Swivels are obstructed Hose not floating properly Adjust hose length for pool shape Inspect and clear swivels Ensure feed hose is floating correctly Possible Causes Solutions Blockage in sweep hose scrubber Improper sweep hose motion Check and clear the scrubber for blockages Adjust sweep hose for a gentle sweeping motion Possible Causes Solutions High sweep hose speed Worn or missing scrubber Lack of sweep hose weight Tighten adjustment screw to reduce speed Replace worn or missing scrubber Add sweep hose weight to prevent excessive spraying Possible Causes Solutions Incorrect wheel RPM Back-up valve not functioning Poor thrust jet adjustment Check wheel RPM for optimal range Ensure back-up valve is cycling properly Adjust thrust jet position Possible Causes Solutions Thrust jet misalignment Feed hose not floating correctly Obstructions hindering movement Adjust the thrust jet for proper water flow Ensure feed hose is floating correctly Remove any debris or obstacles Possible Causes Solutions Waterlogged head float Improper hose float positioning Overloaded debris bag Swivels not functioning Check and replace head float if waterlogged Ensure hose floats are evenly spaced Empty debris bag if more than half full Verify all swivels rotate freely Swimming pools require regular vacuuming and other forms of cleaning to stay clean. Automatic pool cleaners such as the Polaris model 280 roll over the sides and bottom of a pool, driven by water pressure from the pump, picking up debris in the process. Like most automatic pool vacuums, the Polaris 280 needs to be correctly adjusted to perform correctly. If your vacuum fails to clean the entire pool, does not climb the walls or moves too slowly, the likelihood is that the device's wheels are not operating at the optimal revolutions per minute. Other operating problems can be caused by a jet nozzle not aimed correctly or a hose that isn't long enough, both of which can be remedied. Here are some simple troubleshooting steps that will keep your Polaris 280 pool vacuum running correctly. Polaris hose Plastic washer Perform regular maintenance on the Polaris 280 weekly, such as emptying the leaf bag and cleaning the wall screen, to ensure the sweep stays in good condition. Shut down water flow to the Polaris 280 and take the device out of the pool. 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If an adjustable valve is installed after the booster pump, adjust it to reduce the water flow to the vacuum. Pool Center: Auto Pool Cleaners Turn on the pump, then lower the cleaner to water level and count the wheel revolutions for a minute. Increase the speed with one or more of the following steps if the count is less than 28 rpm: Look for debris in the in-line filter’s filter screen that restricts water flow. How do you adjust the thrust on a Polaris 280 in this manner? Remove the Polaris vacuum unit from the water: Turn off the pool pump system and lift it out of the water by lifting it with its hose. How the jet nozzle on a Polaris pool cleaner moves affects how it moves in the pool. Lower the Polaris by the hose back into the pool to test it. Also, do you know how long a Polaris 280 should last? The Polaris 280, which is powered by two cleaning jets, is a quick pool cleaning machine that will have your pool spotless in less than three hours. It’s a smart device that can be used to clean any inground pool, regardless of shape or size. Why does my Polaris 280 run on its side, it’s also asked. The Polaris 280 leans to one side. There are a few basic reasons why it leans to one side while running. is drenched in water. If the head float has a crack that allows water to enter, it becomes heavy, and the cleaner will run on its side. Why is my Polaris spinning in circles? The first thing you have to do is get rid of the cleaner who gets stuck or goes in circles. This is most likely due to the fact that pool cleaners are kept in the pool 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The plastic in the hose becomes a memory and curls slightly when the water is cold or cools off from a hot day. What is the procedure for adjusting a Polaris pressure relief valve? Screwing it into our out-of-the-wall fitting housing can be used to manually adjust it. Screwing it all the way in gives the Polaris the most pressure and speeds it up; unscrewing it will reduce the pressure and slow down the cleaner. Black spring holder pressure relief valve. What causes my Polaris 280 to float? The cleaner loses pressure due to leaks in the Polaris hose, which causes it to float above the pool bottom. Remember that a small amount of water can trickle down from the connections made between hose sections, which is normal. What is the function of the Polaris 280? The 280 is a pressure side cleaner that is powered by water being pushed back into the pool through the water circulation system. Pressure side cleaners don’t add any strain to your pool equipment, but they frequently require a booster pump to ensure there’s enough pressure to move the cleaner. What’s the difference between a Polaris 280 and a 360? The main difference between the Polaris 280 and 360 is that a Polaris requires a booster pump, whereas the Polaris 360 can be used without a booster pump in pools. Both of these cleaners won’t work unless you change the pool equipment if you already have a suction vacuum. What length should my Polaris hose be? Hose Size It should be 6″ long or less than the farthest point. Remove the entire hose from the pool after measuring the excess. The cleaner head is connected to the leader hose. It must be calibrated to the depth of the pool. Sizing the Hose Why is it that my Polaris isn’t moving? Check the Drive Belts Occasionally, the drive belts that control the wheels and cause them to turn break, causing your Polaris to stop moving. You should open up the cleaner and inspect the belts if the Back-Up Valve is working and the tail is moving back and forth but the wheels are not turning. Check The Drive Belts How do I repair the backup valve on a Polaris? How to Troubleshoot a Polaris 360 Backup Valve Lift the part of the Polaris house that houses the backup valve out of the water and run the swimming pool. To disassemble the backup valve body, turn off the pool and unscrew it. To remove debris from the backup valve mechanism, spray water from a water hose with it. Place the mechanism in the case of the backup valve. How to Troubleshoot a Polaris 360 Backup Valve Lift the part of the Polaris house that houses the backup valve out of the water and run the swimming pool. To disassemble the backup valve body, turn off the pool and unscrew it. To remove debris from the backup valve mechanism, spray water from a water hose with it. Place the mechanism in the case of the backup valve. What is the best pool cleaner from Polaris? The Best Polaris Pool Cleaner The Best Polaris Pool Cleaner. Robotic In-Ground Pool Cleaner Polaris Sport F9550. Pressure Side Pool Cleaner by Polaris Vac-Sweep. Automatic pool cleaner with Polaris Vac-Sweep 65 pressure side. The Best Polaris Pool Cleaner The Best Polaris Pool Cleaner. Robotic In-Ground Pool Cleaner Polaris Sport F9550. Pressure Side Pool Cleaner by Polaris Vac-Sweep. Automatic pool cleaner with Polaris Vac-Sweep 65 pressure side. What exactly does the Polaris backup valve do? The Polaris Back Up Valve is a mechanism that attaches to the cleaner’s feeder hose and assists the Polaris cleaner in maneuvering your pool’s floor. If this item isn’t working properly, your cleaner may not be able to do so. Is it possible to leave my Polaris in the pool? Most industries have a filter bowl near the pump on the Polaris return line. When the Polaris isn’t in use, there’s no problem with leaving it in the pool. In The Industry What is the function of a Polaris pressure relief valve? It’s designed to act as a pressure relief, and water should only be let out the side of the fitting when the line’s pressure exceeds spring pressure. It’s there to keep excess pressure away from the Polaris’ internal workings. What is the best way to find a Polaris pool cleaner? The serial number is stamped on a sticker on the back of all newer Polaris cleaner models. It will be a 380 if the serial number begins with a “K,” a 280 if it begins with a “C,” and a 360 if the serial number begins with a “L.” Swimming pools require regular vacuuming and other forms of cleaning to stay clean. Automatic pool cleaners such as the Polaris model 280 roll over the sides and bottom of a pool, driven by water pressure from the pump, picking up debris in the process. Like most automatic pool vacuums, the Polaris 280 needs to be correctly adjusted to perform correctly. If your vacuum fails to clean the entire pool, does not climb the walls or moves too slowly, the likelihood is that the device's wheels are not operating at the optimal revolutions per minute. 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