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A Quick Guide On Setting Up Your First FRESHWATER Aquarium

Important:
Do not use any form of detergents and cleaning agents, or containers use to contain them. Invest in a pail used only for aquarium purposes.

1 Preparing the tank:

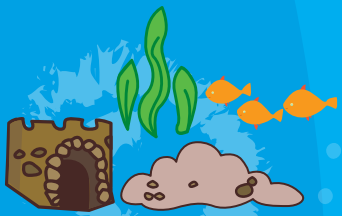
- Check for leaks by filling up the tank with water.
- Use a damp cloth to wipe your tank clean prior to setup.

2 Find a suitable location:

- Ensure that the tank is positioned securely on a firm and level surface before filling up or operating.
- Too much sunlight will cause excessive algae growth. A well shaded place away from direct sunlight would be the best option.

3 Preparing your gravels and ornaments, etc.:

- Rinse the gravels and ornaments thoroughly, ensure that they are clean before adding them to your tank.
- Pour in the gravels. Create a gentle slope starting from the front of the aquarium (bottom) to the back (top).
- Put in your ornaments.



4 Fill aquarium with water:

- Do not pour water directly onto the gravels as it will stir the gravel bed. Instead, place a small plastic bag on top of the gravels and gently pour water on the plastic bag.
- Add de-chlorinator (e.g. Ocean Free® New Water Guard) to your tap water according to the manufacturer's instructions. Tap water contains both Chlorine and Chloramine, which are lethal to fishes.

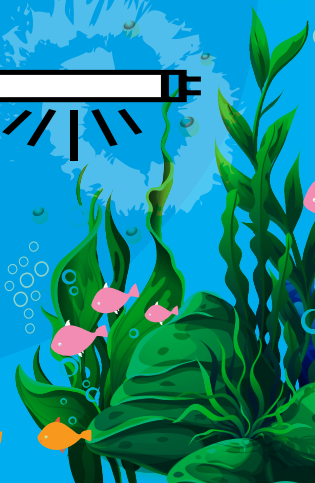
5 Install your filters and lighting / cover before switching on the power supply:

- Install your filters and lighting/cover according to manufacturer's instructions.

6 Cycle your tank (Refer to last page) :

Most beginner hobbyists will experience fish deaths in the first 3 weeks of starting an aquarium. This is due to the Nitrogen Cycle, where the aquariums are not cycled yet.

Important: Do not add any fishes until your tank is properly cycled.



7 Test your water

- Buy an aquarium test kit that measures the level of Ammonia, Nitrite and Nitrate.
- Test for both Ammonia and Nitrite are at zero level. At this stage, your tank is almost ready. Before you add the fish, be sure to change the water to reduce the Nitrate level (<30 ppm).

8 Adding your fishes

- Select fishes that are compatible with each other.
- Do not overstock. A general guideline for the amount of livestock you can keep in your aquarium is 1cm of fish per litre of water. (bit.ly/FshStkCal)
- Float your fish bag with the newly bought fish in your tank for about 10-15 minutes. This will allow the water temperature in the fish bag to adjust to the temperature of your tank.
- Periodically pour in the tank water into the fish bag over a period of 10 mins until the bag is full. This helps the fish to acclimatize to the water conditions in your tank.

Find out how many fishes you should keep!

9 Feeding your fish

- Do not feed your fish on the first day. You may start feeding them the next day.
- Feed enough for the fishes to consume within 3 minutes, for 1-2 times daily. Remove any leftover feeds.

10 Setting up a maintenance routine

- Carry out a 20% to 30% water change at least once a week.
- Siphon the detritus that may have accumulated at the bottom of the tank.
- Use an aquarium glass cleaner to scrape off any algae. Algae usually form when there are excess nutrient (Nitrate) and light. Regular water change will minimize the algae growth.
- Clean your filter equipment bimonthly; or otherwise stated in the manufacturer's instructions.

Important:

Do not use tap water to wash your filter as it will kill the beneficial organisms. Use old aquarium water that you had removed during water change to wash your filter.

Do you know?
There are many ways to cycle your tank...

Fishless Cycling

- **Ammonia Method**
  Add a drop of Ammonia (per gallon of the water tank) into the tank. It will usually take 3-4 weeks for the tank to be cycled.

- **Fish Food Method**
  To start the cycle, add a few fish food pellets into the tank and allow them to decay. This will start to release Ammonia, which require 3-4 weeks and patience.

- **Hydra Method**
  This is the most effective way to cycle the tank. OF® Hydra quickly converts harmful toxins into less harmful elements.

Nitrogen Cycle

The Nitrogen Cycle is the process by which Nitrogen is converted between its various chemical forms. It plays an important role in an aquarium as it keep the fishes alive especially in a small enclosed area and encourage development of beneficial bacteria (Nitrosomona and Nitrobacter) within the aquarium that will greatly assist in converting Ammonia (NH_3) to Nitrite (NO_2^-) and then to Nitrate (NO_3^-). Ammonia and Nitrite is toxic to the fishes, while Nitrate is not highly toxic to fishes in low to moderate level. Hence, a routine water change are required to keep Nitrate level within safe range. This process varies from a week to a month and may even take an extended period to complete.