

Fresh Water Tank Set Up Instructions

1. Placement for your new tank:

Set your tank where you want to keep it. They are heavy when filled with water and are not easy to move. Usually keep them 4" from a wall and away from windows.

2. Gravel:

Place gravel in the bottom of the tank. If you want your tank clear you might rinse it first, but you don't have to. The filter will pick up excess dust.

3. Water:

Fill the tank with water about one inch from the top. Try to use water that is about 75 degrees from your tap. You also need to add your water conditioner. We have chloramine in our water. Not chlorine. In the old days you could leave water out and the chlorine would go away. Not anymore. You **MUST** use some kind of chemical to get rid of it or it can be deadly to your fish.

4. Filter:

Whatever size you chose you will need a filter. The filter is what is going to keep your tank clean. We recommend an outside power filter that comes with its own motor. The bio-wheel ones are designed to help remove ammonia from the water, so if possible, use those. Your filter cartridge should be rinsed once a week and changed once a month. There are directions for all of this equipment but people ask us all the time about why their filter won't work at first. **Filters usually need to be primed.** This means taking some of the water out of the tank and pouring it in the filter box.

5. Heater:

Put your heater in the tank; don't plug it in for a few minutes. Plugging it in before it can adjust to the water temperature can cause the glass to break. Once the heater is plugged in, use the dial to adjust the temperature.

6. Adjusting the Thermostat:

There is a light that comes on when the heater is heating and to set it properly turn it up to the desired temperature (about 78-80 degrees for most fish). For the initial set up you will need to keep a close eye on it to see if it heats the water to the proper temp then turns off. If the light stays on and the temperature continues to creep past the desired range you need to carefully (mark by mark on the dial) turn the heater down until the light goes off. You will leave your heater on 365 days a year and once the thermostat is set you can forget about it because the thermostat will turn the heater on and off as needed.

7. Decorate:

Have fun now, decorate your tank! Fish like hiding places and feel more secure with silk, live or plastic plants. Rocks and caves also help fish feel more at home. Remember stress is the leading cause of fish mortalities so try to decorate the tank to their liking.

8. Test Your Water:

DON'T Rush it! This is the best advice we can give you. Check your P.H. before you add fish. What is P.H? Well, without going in to the technical talk, it is how acid or alkaline your water is. Most fish like neutral pH of 7.0. Wichita tap water is about 8, too high for

happy fish. We recommend proper ph7.0 powder. The liquid stuff seems to bring down the PH for a while, and then it shoots right back up.

9. Adding Starter Fish:

Time for the fun! After your water is tested (PH is fine and Chloramine removed) you get to pick out some "starter" fish. Why do we call them starter fish? Because we want you to have success with your tank, we want you to test the water with cheap fish. A few will die. It is just how things are, and we want you to lose a \$1.99 fish and not a \$20.00 fish. A brand new tank has no "good" bacteria in it. Yep, it is all about "GOOD" bacteria. And that comes from fish poop. So to get a tank started, you have to have something in there eating, and doing "you know what". When you put your first fish in it is also a good time to add "Cycle" which is a dormant bacteria that activates about 3 days after you put it in. It gives your tank a nice biological "boost".

10. Feeding Your Fish:

Don't over feed your fish! About a flake a day per fish is right for a new tank. A fisher's eyeballs are about the same size as their stomach so judge that way. More people kill their fish with kindness because "they look so hungry all the time". Also if you have to go away for a few days, don't worry about your fish starving. It may do them good not to eat for a few days. Like we said, a few will die so don't be discouraged. It is just a part of the hobby. Keeping a few hardy fish in the beginning is the way to success. Ask us which fish are the best ones to start with. Schooling fish, like tetras are fun and cheap. Make sure you buy at least 3 if not 6 to make a nice school.

11. After 3-4 Weeks Add Your Favorite Fish:

After 3-4 weeks bring in a water sample and let us test your water. We can ensure your water has stabilized and doesn't contain high levels of ammonia which usually results in new tank set ups. Fish hate ammonia, but it is part of starting a natural cycle in your tank. One thing you can do to help reduce this condition is to keep the amount of food down.. Think of a baby's diaper and you get an idea of ammonia. In about 3 months you will be due for your first water change of about 20%.

12. Ending Tips:

Remember, this is a hobby, not an exact science. The more you read, ask questions and have reasonable expectations, the more successful you will be. We are always glad to answer questions and help when we can. That is the difference between us and a "chain" store. WE care!

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