



Buying an Aquarium

Important considerations

An aquarium can give you a lifetime of pleasure, however that pleasure does come with some responsibility and work. Fish are like any other pet, requiring some regular basic maintenance to keep them healthy and to keep the aquarium looking good. In order to have a successful tropical freshwater fish tank, once a week, or at most, once every two weeks, you will need to perform some basic maintenance on the tank such as partially changing the water and testing the water chemistry. Your fish will also need to be fed at least once or twice a day.

Aquarium Size

The size aquarium you need is generally determined by the type and number of fish you wish to keep, as well as being determined by the physical space available in the room. It is a good idea to have a rough idea of what type of fish and how many you want to keep. Some fish only grow to 3 to 5 cm, whereas other types of tropical fish can grow 30 cm or more in length!

For beginners, it is recommended to start out with at least a 40 to 100 litre aquarium setup and stock it with some smaller and hardier species. The larger the water volume, the more stable water conditions will be so a larger aquarium can be easier for beginners to maintain. Aquariums within this size range will suit most commonly kept community species.

Positioning your aquarium

It is important to have a level area that will support the weight of the aquarium plus its water and décor (gravel etc). (A stand should also be considered if you are unsure about positioning the aquarium on your existing furniture.) You will also want to be sure that the floor is able to support the total weight of the aquarium and stand, particularly for large aquaria. A good rule of thumb for determining

the total weight of a full aquarium is 1 litre of water is equivalent to 1 kg in weight. For example, a 100 litre tank will weigh approximately 100kg – plus allow at least another 30% for the weight of gravel, filters etc.

Other important factors:

- Direct sunlight is likely to cause excessive algal growth and should be avoided.
- Exposure to extremes of heat (hot or cold) will lead to temperature fluctuations in the aquarium which in turn can cause excessive stress on the fish and compromise their health – position the aquarium away from room heaters, cold drafts etc.
- Access to a double power point on an electrical circuit that has an Earth Leakage Circuit Breaker to eliminate chances of electrocution. The aquarium should also be positioned out of the way of heavy foot traffic, out of reach of small children, and away from other household pets that might harm your pet fish.
- It should be in a place which ensures you have easy access for viewing and cleaning.



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