

Guide to Setting Up Your Aquarium

1. Installation

Firstly, you need to consider where to put your tank, as once it is full of water it will be very difficult to move. Your aquarium should be positioned near a mains supply, away from draughts and direct sunlight to avoid the growth of algae and out of reach of small children or pets. Ask our staff about recommended stands for tanks.

Do You Have The Correct Equipment?

Ask our staff what you may need or check the shopping list on the back of this leaflet.

Once you have all the necessary equipment you can set up your aquarium following the relevant steps.

1. Wash out your new tank and place in its intended position, check the tank for cracks.
2. Wash the gravel in cool clean water, do not use detergents
3. Cover the bottom of the tank with gravel to a depth of 5cm at the rear sloping to 3cm at the front to allow waste to move to the front.
4. Fit your heating and aeration, do not plug in yet.
5. Half fill your tank with cold water try not to disturb the gravel.
6. Wash your plants and decorations thoroughly in clean water and place them in the tank.
7. Fill the tank to within 2-3 of the top and add the water conditioner.
8. Plug in and switch on the air pump and filter wait 20-30 minutes then switch on the heater.
9. it is important to wait for at least 3 days with all systems running before adding any fish. The water may appear cloudy at first but will clear.

Handy Tip:

Make sure your thermometer is visible in the tank to ensure the temperature does not fluctuate.

2. Water Quality

pH measures the waters acidity/alkalinity. The pH scale runs from 0 to 14. pH7 is an ideal level for most fish, check with our staff before you buy.

A temperature of 24-26 degrees is standard for a tropical aquarium and is regulated by a thermostat in the heater. To maintain ideal water conditions and prevent the build-up of dangerous chemicals in new aquariums, perform water changes at least once a week by removing 20% of the tanks volume and replacing it with clean water. Reduce the frequency of water changes to once fortnightly once chemical levels settle.

3. Introducing Fish

It is important to introduce fish gradually over a number of weeks and not to overstock your aquarium. Your filter will need time to adjust to the increase of ammonia in the water if stocked too quickly the filter will not be able to control the levels of waste produced and the water will quickly become toxic. It is beneficial to use ammonia remover when introducing when increasing the amount of fish in your aquarium, please ask our staff for recommended numbers of fish per tank and remember fish and tanks come in different sizes and so there is no exact rule.

We Recommend:

Coldwater fish: 0.5cm of fish per litre of water

Tropical fish: 1cm of fish per litre of water

Always remember to account for fish growth.



4. Choosing Your Fish

North West Garden World has a wide variety of tropical and cold water fish to choose from, our staff are available to help you to make informed choices.

We Recommend:

You ask our staff which fish are sociable and which fish need to be kept in isolation. Our staff will also recommend an aquarium to help you create the best environment for your new fish.



5. Taking Them Home

When we sell fish, we pack them carefully into a plastic bag, they should not be kept in this bag for more than 1-2 hours. When transporting your fish take care not to allow them to get too hot or too cold as this may cause stress. When transporting fish, it is best to keep them in the dark to reduce stress.

What To Do:

When you get home, turn off your aquarium light and float the bag in your tank for about 20 minutes, allowing the water temperature to equalize, then add some of your aquarium water to the bag and wait a further 10 minutes before transferring fish into the aquarium with a net. Throw the old water away do not mix.

6. Feeding Your Fish

There are a number of fish foods available in flake or pellet form which provide a perfectly balanced diet with all the nutrients your fish require to stay healthy. Garden World also stock frozen food which is nutritious and provides essential variety in your fish's diet.

Surface feeders will readily take flakes and floating pellets.

Mid water feeders like granular or slow sinking foods.

Bottom feeders should be offered quick sinking foods or tablets.



7. Maintaining Aquarium

New fish are more susceptible to disease, due to the stress of being moved. New fish should be observed closely for the first week in new aquarium. If you observe any changes in behaviour or unusual spots or markings on your fish, they may have contracted an illness and will require treatment to recover. Many diseases, if addressed early are curable.

Important Note:

Maintaining the water quality is the most important factor in keeping fish healthy. Regular water changes are vital for keeping healthy fish.