

The Easiest Way to Setup a Saltwater Aquarium: Part Two

Establishing Live Rocks in an Aquarium

Aquariums are beautiful in their own right, particularly ones which are large enough to make the viewer feel as though they have been transported into an underwater wonderland. For many individuals the inside of a clear glass aquarium is as close as they will ever come to the wonders of the world beneath the ocean's surface, and for that reason an aquarium which is as close to the natural habitat of its inhabitants as possible is a joy unto itself.

Live rocks, rocks which are covered with both micro- and macroorganisms which help to digest the waste produced by the fish, are a vital part of every natural ecosystem. For that reason it makes sense that they would be an important part of an aquarium environment as well. It is not as simple as dropping a rock into an aquarium and allowing all manner of things to grow on it, however. There is a process that must be followed to ensure optimal benefits for both the large aquarium and the live rock.

It is very simple to cure live rock before placing it in the aquarium, but this is an important step that must be taken in order to prevent a build up of ammonia in the tank which could negatively affect the fish. To cure live rock first select a plastic container that is of a suitable size to hold the amount of live rock which you are working with, then fill it with saltwater. Then place a heater and water pump in the "tank" for optimal temperature and circulation. Once the water has reached the desired temperature remove the heater and pump and half of the water content, then pre-clean the rock in a bucket of saltwater by swishing it around to remove any loose organisms and debris and place it in the prepared water. Then reinstall the heater and pump and allow nature to do its thing!

The process is done when an ammonia reading of the water in which the rock resides is at zero and it is no longer giving off an unpleasant odor. At this time it is safe to place the rock in your aquarium and allow Mother Nature's perfect filtering system to work for you.