

## Setting up a Reef Saltwater Aquariums

Saltwater enthusiasts have developed a love affair with coral reefs. There is nothing they love better than to design, stock and maintain a saltwater aquarium that is teeming with coral.

For years only the most adventurous were brave enough to tackle the challenges proposed by a reef saltwater aquarium. Until recently coral reef was notoriously hard to maintain.

Times have changed. Now there are several varieties of coral that even the most novice saltwater aquarium owner can enjoy. The key to successfully maintaining a reef saltwater aquarium is to have your saltwater reef aquarium properly set up.

The first thing you'll want to find is a tank. Select the largest possible tank that you feel comfortable with. The greater the size of your tank, the greater the water mass encompassing the reef, and the more you will be able to duplicate the effects of the ocean. You can choose either the classic look of a glass aquarium or you can select an acrylic tank which gives you a larger variety of shapes and styles. Acrylic tanks are also more durable than glass tanks. Make sure that there is absolutely no copper anywhere in the tank. Copper has a lethal effect on coral.

Before adding the coral to your tank make sure that the temperature of your water stays consistent. The temperature should remain at 23-25 degrees Celsius (73-77 degrees Fahrenheit). Your coral will remain healthier in water that is always at the same temperature.

It is very important that your reef saltwater aquarium be properly filtered. The three types of filters are mechanical, biological, and chemical.

A mechanical filter is a filter made out of spun nylon floss. Mechanical filter trap and remove wasteful material and prevent your chemical and biological filters from becoming clogged. There are a variety of biological filters. Some use the tanks aquarium substrate as a part of the filtration system. The purpose of biological filters is to contain the biochemical properties and to break down waste products.

Chemical filters absorb the ions of dissolved waste. Chemical filters are typically based on active carbon.

Many reef saltwater aquarium owners like to use other products such as Bioballs

and Protein Skimmers to assist with their filtration system.

The PH level of a reef saltwater aquarium should hold steady at 8.2.

Coral reefs require a filtration system that circulates the tanks water. Moving water tends to be rich in oxygen and the currents carry food to the invertebrates living inside the immobile coral. A submersible pump will do wonders to increase the water flow in a saltwater aquarium.

When you decide that it is time to stock your reef saltwater aquarium with fish you need to remember a few things before rushing out to your favorite fish store.

Bear in mind that just because a variety of fish lives in the ocean does not automatically mean that it's compatible with coral. Some fish eat the invertebrates that make the coral reef their home. Some fish produce waste that is toxic to the coral. Some fish, like Blow-fish, produce a toxin when they die that can kill every living organism in your aquarium.