

## Switching From a Freshwater to a Home Saltwater Aquarium

Many people would like to own and maintain a saltwater aquarium but they shy away from them, turning instead to the freshwater variety because they have been told that saltwater aquariums are difficult to maintain and require additional equipment. That is not necessarily true. For the most part converting a freshwater tank to a saltwater tank is simple. Most of the equipment both tanks use is the same, with only a few notable exceptions. One such exception is the aquarium substrate. Instead of using the gravel that your fresh water fish preferred tropical fish fare better with a substrate that is made of live sand or crushed coral. Most filtering systems work well in both freshwater and saltwater environments, but many aquarium owners take advantage of the opportunity to upgrade their system, it is also important to remember that the filter you are using in your saltwater tank circulates the water throughout the entire tank. Disturbing the water's surface maximizes the amount of oxygen in the water. If you are planning to maintain a fish only aquarium you shouldn't have to worry about upgrading your lighting system. The only time the lights will have to be upgraded is if you start adding coral reefs to your tank.

A mistake many aquarium lovers make when they are converting their freshwater tanks to saltwater tanks is assuming that all they have to do is add a little salt to the water and voila, a saltwater tank. All they have done is create an environment that will kill any coral reefs, tropical fish, and freshwater fish that they place in the tank. The bacteria in saltwater is completely different from the bacteria in freshwater. People who want to speed the waters cycling process should scoop some aquarium substrate from a warm saltwater aquarium and transfer it to a temperate saltwater aquarium. Before you add fish to your freshly converted tank, make sure you purchase a refractometer and hydrometer to test the salinity of your water. The salinity should have a specific gravity that is between 1.020 and 1.026.

Saltwater causes rust. Check your tank and filtration system regularly. If you notice rust starting to form, it's time to replace your equipment.

Before you start stocking your saltwater aquarium with fish do a little research. Many variety's of tropical fish require a different type of food the freshwater varieties. Several of these variety's have to be fed combinations of fresh, frozen, and live food in addition to fish flakes. Frozen food should not be kept in your freezer for more than three months. If you are purchasing a fish that is going to need a great deal of live food, find out what kind of arrangements are going to Switching From a Freshwater Aquarium to a Home Saltwater Aquariums

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