

## How to Create and Care for a Coral Aquarium

Many aquarium owners crave to someday own a saltwater tank displaying numerous kinds of coral. This may be achieved in fast easy steps if you use coral starter kits to grow your own coral. This is recommended over buying coral from a store. By growing your own, you ensure it is properly acclimated to your tank. Setting up and caring for the coral aquarium, or reef aquarium is a task that requires a bit of knowledge before starting. There are some steps to take when setting up a new coral aquarium. The process may seem to take a long time, and because of this, many people opt to use fake coral instead. However, the time spent waiting will be well worth it when you are later able to display your own coral aquarium. If you follow some simple steps and have patience for about 12 weeks, you will be able to create and own your piece of underwater paradise.

To begin, the first thing to do is assemble your aquarium. Find a spot in the home that you wish to have it displayed. Follow through with the set up as you would a freshwater tank. When you are ready to add the water to the tank, follow these simple steps. First, pour the sand into the bottom of the tank. Add dechlorinated water to the tank. Next, add the salt and make sure it is mixed until the specific gravity measures 1.205. After the water and salt are added, arrange your live rock as desired and install the heater and the hood of the tank. After doing these things, you must then wait 4 weeks to move ahead.

After the four weeks has passed, you will then add your first living creatures to the tank. It is best to add fish later, and slowly as to make sure the salt balance in the tank is correct and remains that way. At this time, you can add a variety of snails or crabs if you wish to have them part of your tank. You will also need to install a protein skimmer. The tank should be functioning as if it were full of fish. Make sure the filters are working properly and the lighting is right. Remember not to leave the light on for more than 10 to 12 hours a day as it may promote algae growth. After adding some snails or crabs, wait another 2 weeks before proceeding.

Now at week 6, you will add your first pieces of coral. There are many types of coral used in saltwater coral aquariums. Some of the most common are Button Polyp, Yellow Polyp, Hairy Mushroom Coral and Bullseye Mushroom Coral. Make sure when adding your coral, it is attached to the live rock at the bottom of the tank. Wait another 2 weeks. Don't get frustrated... you're almost there! During the eighth week, you can add Aquacultured Coral such as Pumping Xenia, Starburst Polyps and Spaghetti Finger Leather Coral to name a few. Place these corals into the live rock as you did with the previous set of coral.

Now you have succeeded in creating your reef aquarium. During the course of the

10 to 12 week mark, you may begin adding your fish to your underwater world. It may seem a long drawn out process to get a coral aquarium up and running, but the time and hard work will pay off for years to come. Creating and caring for your coral aquarium will bring you much enjoyment and a wonderful sense of accomplishment for creating a spectacular coral aquarium.