

## How to Care for Live Aquarium Plants

Plants play an important role in aquarium life. They help to absorb nitrites that are toxic to the fish. In fact there are some plant only aquariums. There are many different varieties of aquatic plants. Tubers are a type of plant that needs to be anchored by the root to the bottom of the tank. They may be tied or simply buried underneath the substrate in the bottom of the aquarium. There are also floating plants. As their name suggests they simply float in the tank they do not need to be anchored and will not usually require fertilizer. The only regular care required is to make sure that water droplets are not regularly deposited on the leaves, as this will cause decay.

Water lettuce and Lily pads are examples of floating plants. Rooted plants, like tubers need to be anchored to the bottom of the tank. It is suggested that the roots be tied to pieces of rock or wood. These species usually grow to be fairly tall and will add length to an aquarium. When planting these, remember to allow plenty of room for growth. The roots will grow outwards and require additional space. Another type of aquatic plant is known as cuttings. These plants may be transplanted from other thriving plants, without have to root them. Cuttings should be planted individually. They will grow vertically and sprout shoots at the joints of the leaves. When these shoots grow to be a couple of inches, it is time to cut them and plant them individually.

Live plants may be kept in aquariums alone or with fish. The plants may even be used as a food source for some species of omnivorous fish. At the very least, they will provide shelter and a feeling of refuge for the fish. All plants require some form of light in order to thrive through photosynthesis. Check the specifics on the types of plants with your local retailer. Some plants will thrive on the waste put out by the fish in the aquarium, while others will require regular fertilization. Again check with your supplier for compatibility and feeding requirements. When purchasing plants, make sure that they are true aquatic plants. Live plants should be pruned weekly. Dead or broken leaves should be removed daily.

A live plant aquarium will require the same basic equipment needed for an aquarium containing fish. The basics are as follows. You will need a tank, some sort of filtration system, lighting and some basic cleaning tools. The plants are fairly easy to care for, but you do have to keep up with your regular maintenance. Synthetic plants may be a good alternative to live plants, if you are not willing to make the investment in live plants. Faux plants have come a long way in recent years. So much so, that your fish may not even notice the difference. Whether you choose live or synthetic plants, they will add interest and life to any aquarium.

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