

Aquarium Kit Instruction Sheet

1. Be sure to plan the ideal location of the tank very carefully. Ideally, the aquarium should be situated at a site that is draft-free, away from radiators or direct sunlight (to prevent excessive algae growth), and in a spot that is attractive and convenient for viewing.

Also, make sure that the aquarium is placed on a firm, level, support or base according to the size of the aquarium. (Water weighs eight pounds per gallon!) Do not place an aquarium too high in the air without proper supports.

2. Rinse the aquarium with warm water (do not use any type of soap) and place it in the selected location.
3. Follow the instructions supplied with the undergravel filter. Assemble the filter and place it inside the pre-rinsed aquarium (Figure 1).

4. Next, add gravel to the tank. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the gravel before placing it in the aquarium. Do this by pouring the gravel into a bucket and rinsing it (with running water) until the water runs clear. Count on using a minimum of one pound of gravel per gallon of water. Cover the undergravel filter plates in the aquarium with approximately two inches of rinsed gravel. Slope the gravel downward from back to front (to add perspective).

5. The addition of water is next. Water can be added directly from the tap. To avoid disturbing the gravel, pour the water into a shallow bowl placed on the gravel surface (Figure 2). Fill the tank approximately 3/4 full with water.

6. Treat the water with a water detoxifier (to remove residual chlorine or chloramine) and a water conditioner.

7. Now set up the air system. Set up and connect the pump (using the supplied tubing) to the three- or four-gang valve and then to the air bar and air lift tubes as shown in Figure 3. Two sections of tubing run from the pump to the gang valve inlets. Sections of tubing are then run from the gang valve outlets to each lift tube and to the air bar. Place the air bar at the back of the tank (as shown in Figure 4).

8. Now install the heater and the thermometer. Put the thermometer in a place where it can easily be seen.

9. Allow this equipment to operate for several days to equilibrate the water chemistry and temperature.

Check and adjust (if necessary) the pH to the proper level (generally 7.0 to 7.6). Check the tank pH once every week and any time water is added or exchanged. Consider adding a beneficial bacteria supplement such as Catalog No. FB0402. This supplement starts the nitrogen cycling needed in a healthy aquarium.

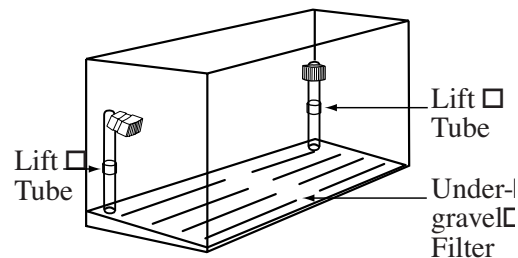


Figure 1.

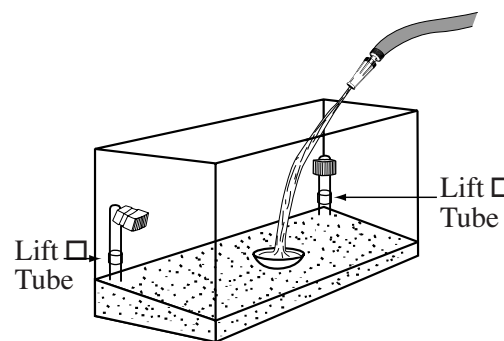


Figure 2.

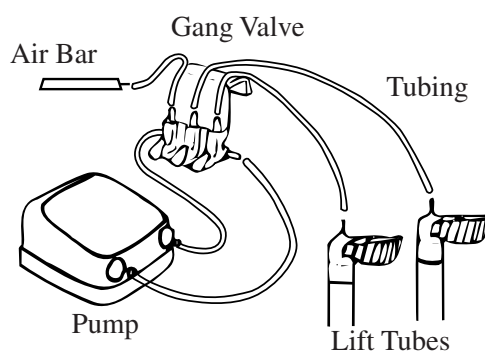


Figure 3.

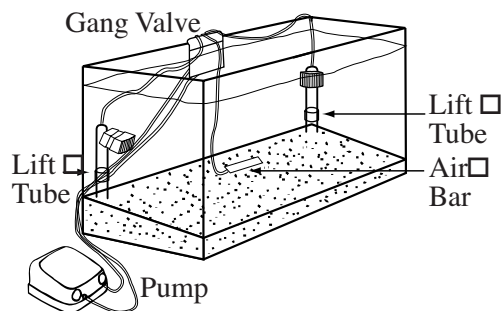


Figure 4.

In most cases, the water should be kept at a constant temperature of around 75 °F. Determine what types of fish are going to be included in the tank and talk to someone at an aquarium shop or locate a fish reference manual to find an appropriate temperature range for the types of fish that are selected. Check the water and make necessary adjustments to the heater setting as needed.

10. Now's the chance to be creative! Beautify the aquarium by adding live or plastic aquarium plants, rocks, and other ornamental decorations. Make sure that all inanimate objects are thoroughly rinsed before placing in the tank.
11. Once the tank is set up and everything is running smoothly, fish may be introduced! Any fish that are compatible with each other and the aquarium environment will work. Fish such as swordtails, zebra danios, and tetras are great to begin with. To introduce the new specimens to the tank, float the bag containing the fish in the water of the aquarium for ten to fifteen minutes to equalize the two water temperatures, then remove about ¼ of the water from the bag and dump it down the drain. Use a second cup to add the same amount of tank water to the bag. Repeat every 10 minutes for an hour. Finally, use a net to capture the fish. Avoid dumping any bag water into the tank. Leave the tank light off for 24 hours after introducing new fish. Feed the fish immediately after transfer. Introduce a minimum number of fish (2–3) at first and gradually add more as time progresses.

It is important not to overcrowd the aquarium. As a general rule, with appropriate aeration and proper filtration, the tank can support one inch of fish per gallon.

12. Do not overfeed the fish! Feed them daily only as much as they can consume in five minutes.
13. Regularly check the cleanliness of the aquarium. From the bottom of the tank, siphon 20 to 25 percent of the water in the tank and replace with tap water of the correct temperature every two to three weeks.
14. When cleaning the gravel, remove one-third to one-half of the total volume, clean and replace. Gravel can be cleaned with a dilute bleach solution—no soap! Just soak with dechlorinator before replacing in tank.
15. Algae growth can be a major problem in an aquarium. Do not leave a light on for more than eight hours a day. Turn the light off every night and on weekends. Experiment with the amount of light provided until plants maintain a nice green color and not too much algae growth occurs in the tank. Clean the algae on the glass of the aquarium as needed. Wipe down the inside of the tank with a sponge or aquarium scraper/cleaner (FB0245).
16. Enjoy the aquarium and the underwater community!

Consult the current *Flinn Scientific Catalog/ Reference Manual* for further information on aquarium accessories and other related products.