How do I go about moving my aquarium?

Tropical Fish · https://shirleyaquatics.co.uk/knowledge/how-do-i-go-about-moving-my-aquarium/

Moving your aquarium can be a strenuous task, however, with a little planning, careful lifting and the proper tools, the job can be done with little stress to you and your fish. Following these basic tips will help ensure a smooth and stress-free move.

Moving Fish and Specimens

If you are moving your aquarium within your home:

Gently net your fish into a clean, 5-gallon bucket (or other suitable container) filled halfway with aquarium water. The fish should be alright in the bucket for around 10-15 minutes without an air stone. Any longer and you should add an air stone for aeration.

When moving an hour or more away from your home:

- Carefully bag your specimens individually the same way your aquatic store does. If the fish are going to be in the bag for over an hour, add pure oxygen to the bags or use a battery operated air pump and seal the fish in a polystyrene container
- Once bagged, place the fish in a cooler or box with a lid. Keep the fish in darkness to reduce stress.

Preparation

- Stop feeding your fish two days before the move. This empties the fish’s stomach, which means they won’t excrete/expel as much waste into the bag or bucket. Fish waste contains ammonia, which can be lethal.
- Set aside several clean 5-gallon buckets (not used to keep chemicals or detergents). The more buckets the better!
- Create a list of things you will need at the aquarium’s new location during set up. Useful items may include:
  - De-chlorinator

- Ammonia remover
- Bottled bacteria
- Airline tubing
- Siphon hose
- Extension cord
- Test kit

- Reserve a space in the moving truck closest to the door for easy access to your aquarium and equipment. The aquarium should be the last thing you pack, and the first thing you take out and set up.
- If moving a distance of 1-6 hours away, bag the fish individually and fill with pure oxygen.
- Live plants can be moved in bags, with some of the original aquarium water or wrapped in wet newspaper to prevent the leaves from drying out.
- For a move out of the house, place the bags in a cooler or insulated box to maintain the water temperature and prevent stress.

Moving the Aquarium

- Use a siphon hose to drain the aquarium. When draining the tank, save as much of the water as possible. Reusing established tank water can help reduce cycling time and reduces the fluctuations in water quality between the old and new tank locations.
- Use clean 5-gallon buckets with lids to transport the old water.
- Carefully pack your pumps, heaters and other equipment in a box. Handle the items like any other fragile goods.
- Remove the gravel and place in 5-gallon buckets or sealed plastic with some aquarium water to keep the bacteria alive. Moving a tank full of gravel is not recommended because it adds weight to an already heavy tank and may add stress to the fragile glass during transport.
- For short moves, keep your filter media and sponges submersed in some aquarium water to keep the bacteria alive. This will significantly reduce cycling time and may help prevent an ammonia spike.
- For a longer move you should either clean or discard your filter media, however, keep in mind that you will need to cycle/seed the new media again.

Aquarium Placement Considerations

- Provide adequate space around the aquarium for access during cleaning and maintenance.
- Electric outlets need to be close enough that you can plug in aquarium equipment without having to use extension cords.
- If possible, place your aquarium close to a tap or sink to make water changes and other aquarium maintenance easier.
- Heating and air conditioning vents, windows and doors, can drastically alter the ambient temperature around the aquarium.
- Keep your aquarium out of direct sunlight. Aside from causing temperature increases, direct sunlight may cause excessive algae growth.
- Place on a sturdy and level surface. As previously mentioned, your aquarium will weigh at least 10 lbs per gallon, so a sturdy floor is crucial.

Setting up the Aquarium

- Whether your new destination is within your existing home, or a new location altogether, you'll need to work quickly to get your aquarium operating again.
- Fill it with as much of the old water as you were able to save and top off with fresh de-chlorinated water at a suitable temperature.
- Set up the filter, heater, and other equipment. Check to ensure the heater is set and everything is operating normally.
- Use Nite out II or similar to introduce large amounts of beneficial bacteria that eliminate toxic ammonia and nitrites while creating a biologically well-balanced aquarium for healthy fish to thrive.
- Add your plants and decorations and test the water parameters, including pH, ammonia and temperature. If the water quality is acceptable, add your fish using proper acclimation procedures.

Following these helpful tips will ensure you can move your aquarium safely and without harming your fish.