How to tell you’re ready for a large aquarium

Aquarium · https://shirleyaquatics.co.uk/knowledge/how-to-tell-youre-ready-for-a-large-aquarium/

A large aquarium may seem like a pipedream or a luxury you cannot afford. It may surprise you to realise, however, that a large tank is often much more economical than you might think - and the best option for you

There comes a time in fishkeepers' lives when they just run out of space.

Maybe the tiny fish they bought years ago is now enormous. Maybe they've been too successful with their planted tank and it's like the day of the triffids in there. Perhaps their aquascaping is becoming more ambitious by the day.

[Large aquariums often look best when rimless - not obstructing your view!]

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Whatever your reason know that you're not alone. We speak to many many fishkeepers on a daily basis struggling to come to terms with the fact they need a bigger tank.

We're painfully aware that many fishkeepers won't tell us about their setup for fear of us telling them they need a bigger tank. You know already, but once we know and have expressed concern (or in some cases, horror) then it becomes a 'real' issue - not just something you have to 'get around to'.

So, to help you come to the right decision with regard to your fish here are the main reasons to get the right-sized tank for you - especially if that means a big one.

[Arowana in a large aquarium in our shop]

Arowanas need plenty of room to grow, they can get to four feet long!

1. Fish grow.

This should come as no surprise to anyone but all fish grow.

The young fish you buy from us will likely get much bigger within a fairly short space of time. No matter how often we advise customers on buying the right amount of fish for their tank considering their ADULT size, very few people listen.

So, let's tackle the big myth;

FISH ONLY GROW TO THE SIZE OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT

Wrong.

Fish grow in two ways. Externally and internally. Their skeletal structure, fins, scales etc WILL grow to suit their environment. Or, rather, they will cease growing if their environment isn't big enough. Their growth will be stunted.

Their internal growth - their organs etc - will continue to grow regardless. Leading to everything getting squashed together and mashed up.

Think of the organs inside a heavily pregnant lady being pushed together by her baby - then imagine that these organs continue to get bigger until they rupture and kill the owner.

Keeping fish in an aquarium that is too small for them will kill them. It may not be visible to the naked eye but it's happening nonetheless. Having a fish that 'looks fine' that mysteriously dies 3 years into a typical lifespan of about 10 years is a classic example of this. Constantly replacing fish is an expensive exercise, particularly if you could prevent this from happening by having a larger tank.

2. I'll upgrade to a large aquarium when I need to.

No, you won't.

Or, at least, you won't when you should. It may sound like the kind of advice we're likely to say (as we sell aquariums!) but buy the biggest aquarium you can afford/fit in your home. There are many benefits to this - particularly if you're a new keeper. Also, if saving money is the main driver behind your purchases you'll likely need to upgrade all of your equipment every time you upgrade. A costly process in the long run!

[Our gear for large aquariums.]

Fishkeeping gear is great fun to buy but having to replace things that aren't broken every few years soon mounts up!

3. I'm only a beginner.

Perfect! The sheer volume of water in bigger tanks makes it much easier to keep fish. It means that any issues you have with your water chemistry (nitrites etc) will easily be 'buffered out' by your water and allow you much more wriggle room and time when it comes to handling any potential problems in your tank.

Smaller tanks and nano tanks are for fishkeepers who really know what they're doing as they take a much keener eye and deep understanding of water chemistry.

[freshwater master test kit for large aquariums]

We'd always recommend testing your water weekly - but the more water you have, the less urgent problems are.

4. What do you mean I can only have 5 fish?

A bigger aquarium allows you to have the amount of fish you actually want. So many new customers will buy a 60 litre tank only to be disheartened when they find out they can barely fit any fish in there. If you're dreaming of teeming shoals then you need the space for it.

[fire guppys in store]

You'll need more room for shoaling or schooling fish!

5. Unhappy tankmates.

Having a larger aquarum reduces aggresion. Many species of fish that would rip each other to shreds in a small tank will rub along just fine in a larger tank. Giving everyone enough room to have their own territory and space will result in a much more harmonious environment. Chilled fish are healthy fish. Healthy fish make happy fishkeepers!

6. Consistency is key / long term money saving

Finally, a larger aquarium allows you to keep one tank going for many years. A bigger initial outlay on a larger tank will save you lots of money in the long run. You won't have to keep buying slightly bigger tanks every 18 months, then having to upgrade all of your equipment every time, then go through the removal and dismantling of the old tank, setting up the new one, cycling it, and potentially losing fish along the way.

So, what are the options for a large aquarium?

The obvious choice for us is the Indo-Reef tanks.

Built for marine fishkeepers but can be used for impressive freshwater setups. This range of tanks come with cabinets and sump setups included and provide the base for absolutely everything any fishkeeper needs to be set for the next 10 - 15 years! They range from £899 to £2,299 in sizes from 60cm across to 6 feet!

Our Indo-Reef tanks are perfect larger aquariums.

Indo Reefs consistently compete with tanks almost double their price tag - particularly Red Sea Reefers. We prefer using these for our displays and we prefer selling them, too.

So much so that we don't even stock Red Sea Reefers anymore! In fact, we did a head-to-head comparison of the two - click here to see what our thoughts were!

Next up is the Cleair range of aquariums - this range of aquarium and cabinet sets have been a staple of our stock for decades. The build quality, features, computer functions (if applicable) and user-friendliness cannot be beaten in our eyes. We stock a wide range of these fantastic tanks - they need to be seen to be believed!

Why not come into the store and head upstairs for a chat with Oli or Gary about Cleair tanks and why a larger tank is probably the answer you're looking for? Even if you might not know it yet!