

Before Water Change

Task	Purpose
Check water parameters (pH, NH ₃ , NO ₂ , NO ₃)	To decide how much water to change
Observe fish behavior	Early detection of stress or illness
Prepare clean buckets or pails	For water removal and refilling – applicable to nano aquariums
Mix water conditioner + refill water	Dechlorinate before pouring into tank – applicable to nano aquariums
Turn off filter, heater, and CO ₂ system	Prevent filter running dry, heater cracking, and CO ₂ pH drop
Ensure water level won't expose filter inlet	If water level falls below inlet, running the filter may damage it
Gather all tools	Siphon hose, algae scraper, towels, test kit, water additive, etc.

💡 Pro Tip: Always switch off your heater before changing water to avoid glass cracking when exposed to air. If your water change will drop the level below your filter inlet, turn off the filter too to prevent damage. And don't forget—CO₂ should be turned off at least 2 hours before and after to avoid pH swings that stress fish.

💡 Pro Tip: If you're using a heater, you may choose to switch it off at least 3 hours before the water change to allow the water to cool slightly and stabilize. If the heater was recently on and you didn't switch it off early, it's best to limit your water change to no more than 30% to prevent sudden temperature drops that could stress or shock your fish.

During Water Change

Task	Purpose
Scrape algae from tank glass	Clear visibility and reduce algae buildup
Siphon 20–50% of tank water	Remove dissolved waste and uneaten food
Lightly stir substrate or vacuum gravel	Release trapped debris without over-disturbing biozone
Check filter intake and outflow	Ensure no blockages; clean surface buildup
DO NOT remove fish	Moving fish stresses them and risks injury
Avoid drastic temperature swings	Match new water temperature to existing tank water
Add anti-chlorine before direct top-up	If using a hose from your tap, dechlorinate the water before filling
Top up water slowly	Prevent temperature shock and reduce stress from sudden turbulence
Monitor water flow during refilling	Prevent accidental overflow—never leave the tank unattended
Stay focused—no phone distractions	Inattention during top-ups is a common cause of floods and chaos

💡 Pro Tip: If you're using a hose directly from your tap, always **add anti-chlorine to the tank first**, and **monitor the water level closely**. Never walk away during a refill—even a few minutes of distraction can lead to overflows and soggy regrets!



QUICK GUIDE TO AQUARIUM MAINTENANCE

Pre

Perform

Post

Water Change

After Water Change

Task	Purpose
Refill slowly with treated water	Avoid shocking fish with sudden changes
Dose beneficial bacteria	Replenish colony if bio-media or sponge was rinsed
Turn filter and CO ₂ system back on	Resume normal water circulation and plant support
Check temperature and flow	Confirm system is stable and equipment is running
Observe fish behavior again	Look for signs of stress or abnormal behavior
Wipe down exterior and clean up	Maintain a neat, presentable display

“Clean Smart, Not Just Clean Often”

Consistent, intentional care is what turns a tank from just surviving to thriving.

Good maintenance isn't just about cleaning. It's about knowing what to clean, when to clean, and most importantly, why you're doing it.