

## Top 10 Fishkeeping Mistakes: A Summary

**Bonus content from the September 2009 AFI magazine article "Top 10 Fishkeeping Mistakes: Part Two."**

*By Paul Demas*

1. **Overfeeding.** Although it is not always an obvious mistake, overfeeding your fish won't just make them fat. It will harm their health and the quality of the water they live in.
2. **Overcrowding.** Too many fish in one tank creates more waste than the system can handle. It also often increases aggression and will result in fish fighting.
3. **Mixing Incompatible Fish.** Fish that should not be housed together can fight, eat each other or have such different care requirements that both will not be able to survive in the same pH, water hardness or temperature.
4. **No Water Changes.** Putting off doing regular water changes in your tank allows toxins to build up, which will eventually poison your fish.
5. **Lack of Filter Maintenance.** Just because water looks clear doesn't mean it is. Mechanical, biological and chemical filtration needs to be present in your tank and functioning properly at all times.
6. **Buying a Tank and Fish the Same Day.** It's necessary to set up a tank and "cycle" it (create necessary bacteria for biological filtration) weeks before purchasing fish. Fish that are purchased on the same day as their tank will most likely die.
7. **Failing to Test Water.** Aquarists that don't use aquarium test kits to monitor their tank water will be unable to prevent unhealthy water conditions before they occur.
8. **Not Quarantining.** Although fish may look healthy in the store, they could be carrying disease. Putting fish from the store directly into a display tank can spread disease and kill valuable fish.
9. **Starting Too Small.** Although it is possible to succeed when starting off with a small tank, fish choices are severely limited, and vigorous maintenance is crucial. Smaller volumes of water are much less forgiving when it comes to improper water parameters.
10. **Garage Sales.** Giving up on the hobby is the worst mistake of all. Selling your tank at a garage sale because you have killed fish is not the way to go. Research the fish you want to keep, as well as how aquariums and aquarium equipment works, will help you succeed in this hobby and keep you from wanting to leave the hobby.

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