

Aquascaping with Live Rock

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Live rock is a beautiful and very beneficial addition to any marine aquarium. Aquascaping with live rock establishes a safe and stable marine environment. It offers fish a natural food source, aids in the breakdown of wastes, creates a foundation for live corals or decorations, and presents hiding places for shy or frightened fish.

Consider the following to create an aesthetically pleasing "aquatic landscape":

Q How can I place the live rock in my aquarium to look as natural as possible?

A The best way to arrange live rock in your home aquarium is to arrange it in a central mound, a horseshoe, a triangular footprint, or even a pair of submerged islands separated by a narrow channel. These formations simulate how live rock is often found in nature.

Look at pictures of other aquariums or natural reefs for inspiration. Create your design on paper before construction to determine what kind of materials you will need.

Strategic placement of live rock can conceal tubing, heaters, and other unsightly aquarium equipment.

Alter the shape and size of the rock with a hammer and chisel, or even a drill, to suit your particular needs.

Avoid accidental shifting during maintenance. Use fasteners or glues to create stable, "permanent" structures. Two-part epoxy glues or long plastic ties work well.

Use larger, unattractive pieces as foundation and place decorative and visually interesting pieces in prominent locations.

Consider using different types of live rock to increase bio-diversity.

Leave enough room in your design for the growth of corals and plants.

Avoid monolithic structures piled up against the aquarium wall. Allow space to facilitate water flow as well as access for maintenance.

Create natural nooks, caves, and overhangs your fish can swim through or hide in for protection.

Remember, there is no one correct way to aquascape your aquarium. Be creative and have fun but be sure to properly cure your live rock before constructing your underwater paradise.

ESSENTIALS

AquaStik Epoxy Putty. Nontoxic epoxy putty perfect for attaching corals and live rock.

Purple Up accelerates desirable pink and purple coralline algae growth without encouraging nuisance algae growth.

Durable Aqua Gloves keep you dry and help you work safely and efficiently inside your aquarium.

RELATED INFORMATION

Fish-Only-With-Live-Rock Aquariums

Responsibilities of a Saltwater Aquarium Owner

Aquascaping Essentials

Cultivate Beauty & Biological Diversity

Live Rock Hitchhikers: What's In Your Liverock?