

## **Fishkeeping myths debunked!**

Written by

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by Sean O'Brien Every hobby has myths associated with them. I'm going to take you through the most common myths about keeping fish and will show you the truth about each one.

**Myth:** Tank stocking can be determined by one inch of fish per gallon of water or by 10 square inches of surface area per inch of fish.

**Truth:** Neither of these are accurate. Each fish has different requirements. For example a 10" Oscar will produce vastly more waste and needs much more space than 10 one inch tetras. There is no hard rule for stocking a tank, only experience and common sense work best.

**Myth:** I will buy a small tank and then if I do okay with that I will move up to a larger one.

**Truth:** It's much easier to start with the largest tank you can afford. Larger tanks tend to be more forgiving. In other words it will take longer for things to go radically wrong in a larger tank than in a small tank.

**Myth:** Goldfish and Bettas thrive in bowls.

**Truth:** No fish will thrive in a bowl. All fish require a constant temperature and most require additional filtration. Fish bowls simply do not provide an environment for healthy fish. You are much better off buying a 10 gallon tank and sponge filter for a few dollars more.

**Myth:** I know someone that has not done a water change in over a year and her/his fish are still healthy.

**Truth:** Water changes are critical for all fish. While some fish may tolerate an increase in nitrates over time they are far from healthy. Nitrates are a toxin and will suppress a fishes immune system and decrease their life span.

**Myth:** My plants keep on dying, aquatic plants are just too hard to keep

**Truth:** It's true that plants have different requirements than fish, but they aren't any more difficult to keep once you know those requirements.

**Myth:** I will just go to the cheapest store in town to buy my fish.

**Truth:** If there was ever a demonstration of "you get what you pay for" then petstores are it! In general stores that offer the lowest price also pay the lowest salaries and consequently get the least knowledgeable staff. They also tend to cut corners in feeding, filtration, and care for their fish.

**Myth:** Aquariums Smell Bad

**Truth:** Properly maintained aquariums should not have an odor.

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Myth: Catfish eat other fishes poop.

Truth: While catfish are often seen digging in the gravel this doesn't mean they eat poop. Catfish need food in the form of pellets or other sinking food.

Myth: If the temperature is in the green zone it is okay

Truth: Every fish has it's own requirements for temperature. What is good for a tetra may not be good for a goldfish. You need to research the requirements of the fish you want and make sure that all fish in that tank have similar requirements.

Myth: My tank is heated enough by the light

Truth: Aquariums need a constant temperature. Fish are very stressed by a few degrees change in temperature. You need a heater to keep the temperature constant.

Myth: My fish will only grow to the size of the tank

Truth: To some degree this is true, but not in a good way. Overcrowding a tank causes stunted growth in fish and consequently an unhealthy and shorter life.

Myth: I can just keep my filter on during the day and everything will be alright

Truth: An aquarium filter needs to run 24 hours a day. Fish excrete waste 24 hours a day and the filter needs to be on to break this waste down.