

Drip Acclimation of Marine Fish and Invertebrates

Welcoming home your new fish is always exciting and fun. Everyone is quick to float the bag and then release the fish as soon as they get home. In the Marine community, it is highly recommended to drip acclimate all fish and inverts upon arriving at home and keep them in a quarantine tank for a week. The main reasons you drip acclimate is to ensure that there is no PH or Salinity shock that may occur during the introduction into your system. Many marine tanks might seem to have the same parameters, but there can always be some differences between aquariums.

- 1) Turn off the lights and float the fish for 15-20 minutes in the aquarium.
- 2) After floating the fish, you can open the bag and put the fish and the water from the store into a fish safe bucket and start your drip line.
- 3) Set up your drip hose into a 5-gallon bucket
 - To properly set up a drip system all you need is at least 5-6 feet of airline tubing (the length from top of the aquarium to the floor).
 - Tie one knot at the top of the airline and secure the airline inside the tank with suction cups.
 - Start a siphon by sucking on the other end of the airline and then tie another knot at the bottom of the airline and put inside your 5- gallon fish safe bucket (this is to control the drips).
- 4) Control the drips by tightening the knots in the airline tubing to about 3-4 drops per second.
- 5) When the water volume in the bucket doubles, discard half and begin the drip again until the volume doubles once more – about one hour.
- 6) Check the salinity and the PH to see that they are the same as your aquarium. If they are not; repeat the process until the parameters are the same.
- 7) At this point, the specimens can be transferred to the aquarium. Sponges, clams, and gorgonians should never be directly exposed to air. Gently scoop them out of the drip bucket with the specimen bag, making sure they're fully covered in water. Submerge the bag underwater in the aquarium and gently remove the specimen from the bag. Next, seal off the bag underwater by twisting the opening, and remove it from the aquarium. Discard both the bag and the enclosed water. A tiny amount of the diluted water will escape into the aquarium; this is O.K. Also, to avoid damage, please remember never to touch the "fleshy" part of the live coral when handling.
- 8) When introducing new marine fish and inverts to your aquarium at home, these steps are crucial to being successful at keeping all fish and inverts happy. The marine hobby is all about patience and enjoyment.