# Fish Rescue & Welfare

fishrescueandwelfare.org

**What is a fish tank cycle? Beginners basic guide explained.**

**IF A SHOP TELLS YOU THIS CAN BE DONE IN 24 TO 48 HOURS, THIS IS NOT FACTUAL. CYCLING A TANK TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE TO DO IT PROPERLY AND MAKE IT 100% SAFE FOR FISH TO GO INTO.**

**What does it mean to cycle a fish tank?**

**It means you are creating a filtration system by ensuring there is a bacteria colony in it that removes toxic waste to ensure your aquatic life has a healthy environment to thrive in. When you first set up a tank the water will not be safe to add fish. At first ammonia will be a problem, but then after a couple of weeks, nitrite levels will start to peak. Both of these can kill.**

**Why do you need to mature a new biological filter?**

**New filters do not contain the bacteria necessary to remove ammonia produced by fish and rotting food, so they are initially unable to keep the water free of pollution. The process is essential to ensure that the filter works correctly by keeping the water free of pollution.**

**The nitrogen cycle (also known as the nitration cycle) is the process that breaks toxic nitrogen waste products in an aquarium into less harmful components. ... Thus, cycling is something that every new aquarium owner needs to do to ensure the health and safety of his/her fish.**

**There are two ways of cycling a fish tank – one with fish and one without fish. Fishless cycling is preferred, as fish aren't subjected the high ammonia and nitrite levels which can harm or even kill your fish.**

**What is fishless cycling?**

**Fishless cycling is a method of maturing (or cycling) a new biological filter using chemical means rather than adding fish.**

**Maturation, or cycling, is simply the process of growing beneficial bacteria on the filter. You do this by providing a pollution source for the bacteria to use for energy, and then waiting several weeks for the bacterial colony to reach full size. When all of the bacteria have grown the tank will be free of ammonia and nitrite, nitrate will have started to build up, and the filter is termed mature, or cycled.**

**How long does it take for a fish tank to cycle?**

**Just give the tank time. The cycling process usually takes six to eight weeks. After about eight weeks, your ammonia and Nitrite levels should be acceptable (about trace levels), and you can add more fish. Do not add more fish until the ammonia and Nitrite levels have both dropped.**