

01. Oxygen and Water Movement

Told by: Ozzie the Oxygen Bubble

"Breathe, sparkle, repeat! That is the whole job! That is the entire schedule! Oxygen in, waste out, bubbles rising, life continuing! It really is not complicated!" — Ozzie, arriving at maximum enthusiasm from the air stone

Fish breathe oxygen — but not from the air. They breathe oxygen that is dissolved in the water, collected through their gills as water flows past.

The tricky part is this: water can look perfectly clean and still be dangerously low in oxygen.

A crowded tank, a warm tank, a dirty tank, or a tank with no water movement will run out of dissolved oxygen faster than you might expect. And when that happens, the fish — as Ozzie will tell you at considerable length — cannot breathe.

Good oxygen levels need good water movement. A working filter, an air pump, a spray bar that ripples the surface — anything that keeps the water turning over and exchanging gas with the air above.

⚠ Without enough oxygen and water movement, fish can suffocate even when the tank looks perfectly fine from the outside.

Yechiel's Rule: Moving water = oxygen. Still water = trouble. Keep things flowing.