# *Chemicals To Test For – A Simple Guide*

## *Article by: Underwater*



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**Ammonia**
*What it is:* A chemical found in fish waste or produced by rotting stuff (food, plants, fish)
*Why should I care?* Ammonia is poisonous to fish

**Nitrite**
*What it is:* A chemical produced by bacteria that consume Ammonia as part of the nitrification process (See the article on cycling)
*Why should I care?* Nitrite is poisonous to fish

**Nitrate**
*What it is:* A chemical produced by another type of bacteria that consume Nitrite as part of the nitrification process. Plants will also absorb this.
*Why should I care?* Too much can be poisonous to fish, can also cause algae blooms.

**PH**
*What it is:* A measure of how acidic / basic your water is
*Why should I care?* Fluctuations can be stressful to fish. Some fish also have specific requirements for PH.

**KH**
*What it is:* How much acid/base your water can absorb before the PH changes
*Why should I care?* Too little and your PH will fluctuate

**GH**
*What it is:* How hard your water is
*Why should I care?* Some fish has specific requirements for hardness.

**Iron**
*What it is:* A metal used by plants
*Why should I care?* If you have live plants, you should keep your iron levels within a good range for plant health. You can buy iron supplements.

**Oxygen**
*What it is:* Chemical breathed by animals and fish. Produced by plants during photosynthesis.
*Why should I care?* Without enough, your fish will suffocate.

**Co2**
*What it is:* Chemical breathed by plants. Produced by animals and fish during respiration.
*Why should I care?* Too little and your plants will die. Too much and it kill fish.