Quick reference setup chart

The following is a step-by-step guide designed to help you keep track of the various stages involved in setting up, cycling and monitoring your MAX in the first three critical months of aquarium operation.

Each stage is explained in depth in the MAX User Manual.

Cycle period	Week 1							Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Month 2	Month 3
	day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7					
Assemble the MAX	✓											
Fill tank with water & mix salt	✓											
Test salinity & temperature	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Test equipment	✓											
Add substrate	✓											
Test pH & alkalinity	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Add live rocks	✓											
Cure live rocks [1]		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Test Ammonia, Nitrite & Nitrate [2]		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Test calcium & phosphate	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Algae bloom [3]				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Stock with "cleaning crew" [4]								✓				
Stock with fish [4]										✓	✓	✓
Change water								✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stock with corals [5]										✓	✓	✓
Feed invertebrates										✓	✓	✓
Clean mechanical filter		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Change carbon											✓	

1. If cured live rocks are introduced on day 1, the 4-week curing cycle can be shortened to just a few days (until ammonia and nitrite levels are no longer detectable).
2. Ammonia, nitrite and nitrate should be tested on a regular basis during the cycle period - every 2 days in the first week and at the end of each subsequent week.

   Special attention should be paid to ammonia and nitrite peaks in order to monitor cycle progression.
3. Algae blooms are a good sign in the cycling procedure and the maturation of the tank. From day 3-4 post set-up, the brown algae will start to cover the aquarium glass and rocks, followed by the red cyano-bacteria and sometimes green filamentous algae. These should disappear naturally during week 4 with the help of the "cleaning crew."
4. Stock with fish only after testing water parameters (salinity, pH, ammonia, nitrite, alkalinity and calcium). During week 3 you can add two small damselfish. The next fish should be added at the end of week 4.
5. Stock with corals only after testing water parameters. Ammonia and nitrite levels should be 0, Phosphate 0-5ppm, pH 8.2-8.4, alkalinity 2.5 meq/l and calcium 400-450.