

# Reduce The Headache of GLASS CUTTING

By Following These Techniques



Oh, No - GLASSCUTTING!

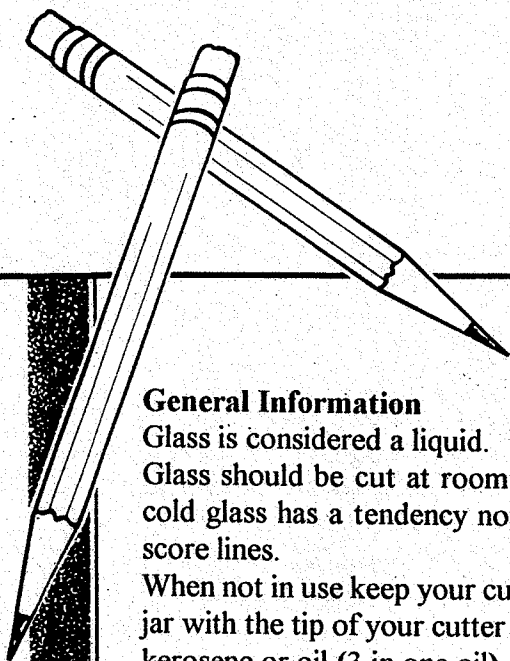
by HORST GERBER

**Introductory Note:** Glass is, obviously, a singularly important component of the aquarium hobby. In this how-to article, veteran GCAS member and master craftsman Horst Gerber instructs us on glass cutting. Not only can cutting your own glass allow you to make customized tanks, or repairs, but you can then make other useful items such as tank covers and dividers. You can also save money because you can then take scrap glass (you'd be surprised at how much glass people place with their garbage) and turn it into these useful items.

J. Ferdenzi

Cutting glass can be a real "pane." Or it can be fun. All kidding aside, it all depends on how much practice you are willing to put into it. My experience with glass cutting goes way back. I couldn't cut a piece of glass to save my life. I was a cabinet maker back then and cutting glass was not an issue, till I had to cut some glass for a curio cabinet. I was going through panes of glass like chewing gum, and more scrap would be crashing in the garbage barrel than ending up in the doors of the curio cabinet. The nasty gritting hisses of glass, not to mention the necessary act of grabbing the glass with your bare fingers and snapping it down a true line, can be scary. It is enough to cause anxiety, frustration and cold sweats. But I kept working at it and I continued to improve. As years went by, I didn't even think about it. That is till I had to cut some larger pieces of glass again, and I was determined to do it right. "Armed with a piece of glass and my glass cutter" I went to a glazier who had done some work for me in the past. I said "I am going to cut a piece of glass in front of you and you tell me what am I doing wrong."

As I was struggling making my first cut and little shards appeared alongside my cut, I was stopped in my tracks with the simple comment you don't know your own strength, you press to hard when you are scoring the glass. Since then I have mastered the art of glass cutting with a little less pressure on the cutting wheel. Keep in mind you are not really cutting the glass. You are only displacing the molecules on the surface of the glass. If you are struggling with cutting glass or you haven't mastered cutting curves or straight lines check out these tips. You don't need a glass cutting machine, a 4-dollar tool and the best "machine" money can buy are your hands and ears by listening for that even scritchng sound when scoring.



### **General Information**

Glass is considered a liquid.

Glass should be cut at room temperature-cold glass has a tendency not break at the score lines.

When not in use keep your cutter in a small jar with the tip of your cutter submerged in kerosene or oil (3 in one oil).

### **Important Suggestions**

Try not to be afraid of the glass.

Do not slide your hands along edges of glass.

Always grab glass firmly to avoid cuts.

Place glass on a flat, cushioned firm surface when scoring (homosote, etc.)

### **Basic Cutters - A Good Investment**

Basic cutters are worth having. The straight top versions sold at your local hardware store as steel wheel glass cutters does an excellent job cutting glass. Metal Ball Top Fletchers is the most common. There are different groups of wheels, which are for "art" (stained glass) and all the weird stuff that is done with glass, rondels, mosaics, fusion glass etc. These wheels are generally a bit larger and sharper to actually cut a score. However, on windows, aquariums and glass for pictures (art work) where you just sort of roll out a scratch, the inexpensive glass cutter will do fine. The best method to store your glass cutter when not in use is keep your cutter tip submerged on the bottom of a small glass jar that contains a sponge or gauze pad on the bottom, saturated with kerosene or 3-In-One Oil.

# **GLASS CUTTING**

## **Glass Cutting Process**

- Cutting glass probably causes you some anxiety. Keep in mind that you are not going to actually cut the glass. What you are going to do is score it.
- **Lubricating** of a glass cutter before each cut is a **must** (dip the tip of your glass cutter into lubricant).
- Lubricants: glass cutting oil, kerosene, or any thin oil will do.

