



Feeding and water

Fish should be fed sparingly with a suitable proprietary brand. There are many to choose from. Your pet shop will be pleased to advise.



Shopping List

Aquarium Tank	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rock / Stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heaters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thermometer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Test Kits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Conditioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Filter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ornaments	<input type="checkbox"/>	Remedies	<input type="checkbox"/>
A good book on tropical fish care			<input type="checkbox"/>

This leaflet is produced by the Pet Care Trust, the national charity that promotes the benefits of pet ownership and education. For more information, go to www.petcare.org.uk, or phone 01234 273933.



Remember you must never release your pet into the wild.

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CARING FOR YOUR TROPICAL FISH

Aquariums are basically a complete mini-ecosystem. There is a wide choice available and your pet shop will be pleased to advise.

Remember fish kept in an aquarium are totally dependent on you for their welfare.

There is a wide variety of fish to choose from: your pet shop will be pleased to advise you on a suitable selection of fish.





Choosing and buying your tropical fish

There is a wide variety of fish to choose from and although many can be mixed together in the new aquarium care must be exercised with respect to compatibility for temperature requirements, feeding habits, water quality and sociability.

Your pet shop will be pleased to advise you on a suitable selection of fish.

A healthy fish should:

- ❖ swim easily through the water and be active
- ❖ not gasp at the surface of the tank or swim in a peculiar manner
- ❖ have scales that cover the body evenly without any cuts or growths



Housing

THE TANK

There is a great variety of designs and sizes to choose from. Always select a branded product. Handle with great care and transport horizontally. The tank must be placed either on a specially designed stand or a strong rigid surface with an expanded polystyrene mat underneath the tank.

Remember that a full tank is heavy. Position the tank away from windows as daylight encourages algae growth. Never move a full tank.

THE EQUIPMENT

A heater thermostat is required to maintain water temperature. This is normally between 70° and 80° F (20° and 27° C) depending on your fish.

A thermometer is required to monitor the temperature.

A filtration system is required to maintain good water quality, essential for the health and well being of your fish.

Purpose-built lighting systems will bring the tank to full life and stimulate plant growth.

Too much light will result in excess growth of green algae, too little will cause plants to die.

For tidiness and safety it is sensible to connect all wiring to a control panel.

GRAVEL AND ROCK

Use only suitable gravel and rock. Your pet shop or aquatic store will advise you. The material should be thoroughly washed before placing in the tank.

SELECTION OF FISH AND PLANTS

There is a wide variety to choose from, but always seek advice from your pet shop as to the suitability of your chosen selection.

Do not exceed the number recommended for your particular set-up.

Plants should be planted thickly for the best effect, but they may need thinning out once established. Artificial plants are also available.

SETTING UP YOUR TANK

Thoroughly rinse your new tank with clean water.

If you are using an under-gravel filter install this first, spread the gravel across the base of the tank, sloping from back to front. The rock can be partially buried in the gravel.

Next slowly fill the tank with water. Install the heater and airline from the pump to the filter before connecting to the mains.

Water conditioners can be added at this point and the tank left to settle for up to 7 days before introducing the fish

Check that the equipment is working properly before adding the fish. When bringing your new fish home do not let the water get cold. Float the bag in the tank for 15 minutes, then open the bag and allow the fish to swim into their new home. Introduce hardier species first.

MAINTENANCE

Once established your system should require little maintenance. Check the thermometer at least daily. Once a fortnight siphon off 2 ins (5cm) of water and replace with fresh conditioned water. Never use hot water from the domestic supply. At least every 18 months completely empty the tank, keeping the water to refill afterwards, clean the rocks and gravel (not with detergent) and replace everything carefully. Remove uneaten food, rotting plants and excreta regularly.

INTRODUCING YOUR FISH INTO THE TANK

Firstly turn the tank light off as this helps to reduce stress.

Float the unopened bag in the top of the tank for at least 15 minutes to regulate any temperature differences, this avoids shocking the fish. Open the bag and allow the tank water to enter it before gently releasing your fish into the tank.

Turn the light back on after about 2 hours.