

*Full of advice
on caring for
your pet*

Your guide to
Tropical Fish



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Are you ready?



There is a huge range of tropical fish with many different sizes, types and colours to choose from.

A tropical fish tank can make a beautiful and fascinating addition to any home, creating a soothing and tranquil setting. Fish make great pets as they require relatively little maintenance and they are ideal if you do not have the time needed for more demanding pets.

Make sure you have the right tank size

The most important factor to consider is the compatibility of the different types of fish and their temperature, water type and feeding requirements.

Although fish in general are one of the easiest pets to look after, you must consider whether you will be able to provide the required care and commitment your tropical fish will require throughout their life.

Selecting your Tropical fish

What to look for - A healthy tropical fish should be active and able to swim through the water easily. If they gasp at the surface of the tank or swim in a peculiar fashion then this can indicate problems. Look closely at their scales, which should cover the body evenly without any cuts or growths.

Community tank - Most beginners choose to build a 'community tank'. This means that the fish in the tank are chosen as they are all compatible with each other and do not have greatly varying water types and temperature requirements. They are also unlikely to be aggressive towards each other as other types of fish can be. Fish other than community types are best left to experienced fishkeepers.



At home with your Tropical fish

Choosing the most suitable aquarium is just as important as selecting the fish to live in it. An aquarium provides the complete mini-eco system your fish needs to survive and thrive. There are many different types and sizes of aquariums available and your local Jollyes will be more than happy to advise you on the most suitable for you.

The Tank - There are a large variety of tank sizes, designs and styles to choose from. The quality of the tank is one of the most important factors when caring for your tropical fish. Remember, a full fish tank is heavy, so it needs to be placed on a flat solid surface. The best place to put your aquarium on is a matching aquarium stand. This is thoroughly recommended and many tank manufacturers will not guarantee their tank if the correct stand is not used. Position your tank away from windows, as direct sunlight will encourage algae growth. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions exactly when setting up and maintaining your tank.

Water temperatures - You will need an electric heater with a built-in thermostat to maintain the correct water temperature. This is normally set at between 22 and 26°C (72 and 78°F), depending on the type of fish. A thermometer must also be used to monitor the temperature.

Filtration - Filtration systems are very important for the health and well being of your fish as they keep the water free of contaminants and help to maintain a high water quality and environment.

Lighting - Many aquariums are supplied with lighting and filtration systems that are built-in. Lighting is a crucial part of any healthy tank as it stimulates plant growth whilst adding brightness and colour. Too much lighting will result in excess growth of green algae, which will cause the plants to die.



Gravel and rock - Ensure you use only specially prepared gravel and rock for your tank. Thoroughly wash the gravel and rock before placing it in the tank. Never use household disinfectants to wash anything that will go in your fish tank.

Plants - Live plants are very beneficial for your fish. They should be planted thickly for the best effect, placing the tallest at the back of the tank and the shortest at the front. Water treatments are available that help to stimulate plant growth without harming your fish.

**Do not
overfeed your
tropical fish**

Setting up your tank

1. Thoroughly rinse your new tank with clean water.
2. If you are using an under gravel filter, this needs to be installed now.
3. Once thoroughly washed, put in the gravel by spreading it across the base of the tank, sloping down from back to front.
4. Wash, arrange and partially bury the rocks in the gravel.
5. Untreated tap water is not good for fish as it contains chlorine. Slowly fill the tank with water that has been treated with a dechlorinating additive.
6. Install the heater, lighting and internal filter, if used, before connecting them to the mains.
7. Add a water conditioner that helps establish the biological filtration. Leave the tank with the filter running for around a week, checking and adjusting the thermostat as necessary to achieve the correct temperature before introducing the fish.
8. Ensure that the lighting and filtration are working properly before adding any fish.
9. Test the water before adding any fish.

Introducing your fish to the tank

1. When taking your new fish home ensure to check that the water temperature does not drop too much. Go straight home after buying fish.
2. Turn the tank light off to reduce stress.
3. Float the bag of fish in the tank for 15 minutes. This will regulate any temperature differences and avoid shocking the fish.
4. Open the bag and allow the tank water to enter it before gently releasing your fish into the tank.



5. Turn the light on after a few hours
6. Introduce your new fish gradually, avoiding the temptation of adding large numbers all at once, which can result in sudden changes of water conditions that can be harmful to your fish.
7. Please note that it is best to introduce the hardier species first.

Give your fish plenty of places to hide.



Feeding

What should I feed my fish? It is important to choose a food that is suitable for all your fish types. Always follow the manufacturer's feeding instructions on the back. One of the most common problems experienced by new fishkeepers is water contamination caused by over-feeding.

Maintaining your tank

1. Check the thermometer everyday.
2. Remove decaying plants and uneaten food.
3. Every two weeks, siphon off approximately 25 % of the water and replace it with fresh dechlorinated water.
4. At least every 12 months, completely empty the tank, but keep the water to refill the tank afterwards. Clean and rinse the gravel and rocks and replace everything before refilling the tank and top up with dechlorinated water as necessary.

Please note that keeping tropical fish is a very complex subject. This information guide is intended as a basic beginner's guide only as it is not possible to cover details of different types of fish, their compatibility with each other, common diseases and varying needs. We recommend purchasing a good book to ensure you have all the sufficient knowledge to enjoy successful fishkeeping.



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Shopping Checklist

We recommend the following items to set up a tropical fish tank.

Tropical Fish Checklist

- Aquarium tank with lid
- Heater with thermostat
- Water filter
- Thermometer
- Water conditioner (Dechlorinator)
- Gravel
- Rocks
- Ornaments
- Plants (plastic or real)
- Food
- Water test kit
- A book on tropical fish care

It is now time to relax and enjoy your tropical fish.

For further information contact:

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