

CARING FOR YOUR NEW FISH

Never put your fish straight into normal tap water, as this water can contain chlorine, chloramines and heavy metals that could be extremely harmful to your fish. You will need to treat your tap water to make it safe and turn it into aquarium water. You will need to neutralise chlorine and chloramines with a “water ager”. Using a “water conditioner” will harden the water and add electrolytes to your tap water. These will need to go into your aquarium whenever you add more tap water. Adding a biological agent to your tank and testing the Ph and hardness of your water each week will aid in maintaining a healthy environment for your fish.

When you arrive home it is best to remove the fish from the bag and into his new home as quickly as possible. Float the bag containing the fish in the tank water until the two are the same temperature (5–10 minutes) before releasing the fish into the aquarium. This gives the fish a chance to adapt to the new water. Remember, do not touch the fish with your hands, as that damages their natural slime coating. Use a fish net if required to remove your fish from the bag.

CLEANING YOUR FISH TANK

Cleaning of your aquarium should take place on a regular basis, by using a gravel syphon. The gravel syphon helps to remove water and fish waste. Using a magnet cleaner will help clean the glass. Also remove and clean any dirty ornaments. Remove 1/2 the water for gold fish and 1/3 for tropicals, add fresh water. The water then needs to be treated with items, as previously mentioned in setting up your tank. We recommend partial water changes weekly for the first 8 weeks. This can then be reduced to every 2–3 weeks if you have a good filter.

Be sure to NEVER use chemicals or SOAPS when cleaning your fish tank ornaments or accessories. Chemicals will pollute the water and have a harmful effect on the fish.

When using an under gravel filter we DO NOT recommend you change all the water or over-clean the gravel as this destroys helpful bacteria and upsets the natural equilibrium of your aquarium. When cleaning your filters, be sure to read all enclosed documentation that came with your filtration unit.



FEEDING YOUR FISH

Only feed your fish very small amounts, and be careful not to overfeed them. It is a good guide to understand that your fish only needs as much as it can eat in 30 seconds, so you do not have to feed them much at all. Overfeeding fish is probably one of the most common reasons fish die, as too much uneaten food in the tank can often make the tank water murky and toxic. Feed your fish small amounts 2 or 3 times a day.

Different fish require different food. We stock a large range of foods, such as fish flakes, pellets and freeze dried varieties. Bottom feeders need to eat from a sinking pellet. A combination of these is recommended. Please ask our staff what type of food you should be feeding your fish.

When going on holidays, feed your fish with a vacation block. This is a slow release food block that will distribute food whilst you are away and keeps the water quality under control. A variety of blocks are available, including weekend and vacation feeders. Neutraliser blocks and feeding blocks should NOT be used together. A live plant is certainly a useful addition to your tank, as they are a constant food source for your fish and are especially good to have in the tank when you are going on

holidays. Alternatively, a battery operated feeding unit will feed your fish twice a day while you are away, for up to 4 weeks.

LIVE PLANTS

Live plants are an alternative food source for your fish. They are a healthy vegetable source that helps to recycle the fish waste, adds oxygen to your tank water, whilst making your tank look attractive. For your plants to remain healthy, they require plant food, natural light, and movement within the water. Weekly feeding the plant with plant food and making sure that it has adequate lighting will ensure a thriving plant population. CO2 kits will also enhance the growth of your plants.

LIGHTING FOR YOUR FISH TANK

Suitable aquarium lighting is required to create a natural light and promote healthy plant growth. Conventional fluorescent tubes will not provide correct lighting, and as a result, algae will grow and will make your aquarium look dirty. The best tubes for your tank are



those with the correct UV and spectrum. To enhance the colouring of your fish and the appearance of your aquarium, choose the highest quality tube available.

DRESS UP YOUR TANK

Various aquarium backgrounds are available, as well as ornaments, rocks, and novelty products for your aquarium. These come in different shapes, colours and sizes, adding interest and depth to your aquarium.

FILTERS

Filtration systems greatly improve the water quality and reduce the overall tank maintenance, as they rid the water of solid,

liquid and gas waste. By having a filter in your tank, you will not need to change the water quite as often as you would without one, and you will also be able to keep more fish in the same volume of water. The best type of filter is one that can provide the 3 types of filtration – physical (mechanical), chemical & biological.

GENERAL HINTS

If you are planning on keeping tropical fish, a heater and a thermometer are essential, as the water needs to be kept at a constant temperature.

All aquariums need to be placed on a flat surface and polystyrene base. The base will also absorb vibrations. Tanks may crack due to their extreme weight if not positioned correctly.

HOW TO MAKE TAP WATER SAFE FOR YOUR FISH

There are four essential ingredients that will make tap water safe for your fish:



CHLORINE NEUTRALISER/WATER AGER:

neutralises chlorides, chloramines and heavy metals, fluorides, minerals and chlorine that produce an unsuitable environment for fish. Some of these treatments can also protect the slime coat on a fish.

WATER CONDITIONER: adds calcium, salts and minerals to increase water hardness levels that are safe for fish.

BIOLOGICAL BACTERIA: adds beneficial bacteria that will help break down waste and maintain a healthy fish.

pH TEST KIT: tests for and corrects water acidity, alkalinity and neutrality. Water can often be acidic due to fish waste, or alkaline when it is directly from the tap. This can be harmful to your fish. The test kit will indicate whether the water needs to be corrected with the neutraliser to make it suitable for your fish. Alternatively pH neutraliser blocks can help maintain the correct pH level.

WATER HARDNESS TEST KIT: Depending on which part of Australia you live and what type of fish you wish to keep, you may need to adjust the hardness of your water.

IN ORDER TO KEEP YOUR FISH IN TOP CONDITION, RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Tank/stand/foam – glass, perspex, round, square, fish tanks come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some come complete with internal filters.
- Water ager/chlorine neutraliser – removes chlorine, chloramines and fluoride found in tap water. Some products have an aloe vera content to replenish your fish's slime coat and assists in disease prevention.
- Water conditioning salts – adds essential calcium salts and minerals.
- Biological aquarium booster – provides fish, especially those in a new environment, with beneficial bacteria that consume waste. Also a good kick start to the biological cycle.
- pH test kit/neutraliser block – will maintain a neutral pH level.
- Hardness test kit – will test the hardness levels in the water.
- Ammonia test kit – one of the biggest problems with new tanks can be dangerous levels of ammonia.
- Gravel – aids in decoration and when used in conjunction with an under gravel filter it also provides a place for healthy bacteria to grow. Gravel should always be rinsed before being put into water, to remove any dust particles on it.
- Gravel cleaner – assists in the regular maintenance of your fish tank.



- Fish food – a varied diet is necessary for maintaining a healthy fish. Pellets, flakes, freeze dried and frozen foods.
- Live plants – important part of your fish’s diet, as the plants help to recycle the fish waste and oxygenate the water. The plants are also a vegetation source for your fish.
- Plant anchors will help keep your plants in the gravel until their own roots hold them in place.
- Plant food – provides essential nutrients to maintain healthy plants. An aquarium light is important to encourage growth.
- Snails/algae eating fish – to aid in algae control.
- Magnet cleaner/algae cleaner – for easy removal of algae from tank.
- Filters and filter material – to improve the water quality and reduce maintenance on your tank.
- Air pumps/accessories – air stones and aerating toys break the surface tension and allows gases to exchange, adding oxygen to the water. Gang valves & suction caps optional accessories.
- Check valve – will prevent the back flow of water into your pump if the power goes out.
- Heater and thermometer – if keeping tropical fish.
- Lighting – to brighten your tank and assist in the growth of plants and fish.
- Artificial plants – for added interest and decoration.
- Aquarium background – to enhance the look of your tank.
- Fish net – so you do not have to handle the fish.
- Ornaments – either ceramic or polyresin for decoration.
- Vacation/weekend blocks – slow release food block to distribute food whilst you are away. Also battery powered auto feeder can feed for up to 4 weeks.