

# Tropical Fish Care Guide

Tropical fish are fascinating pets, but they're reliant on you for their care and environmental health so it's important that you maintain a healthy place for them to live.

## Environment and Housing



The tank is the most important aspect of tropical fish care and you need to provide a suitably sized environment for your fish.

As species vary, ask a team member for the appropriate sized tank for your choice of fish. Tropical fish live in warm water so you will need a heater and thermometer to ensure that the temperature stays consistent. The other essential item is a good filtering system as this will help to maintain a healthy and safe environment.

**There are three types of filtration that every aquarium requires:**

**Mechanical** filtration removes the larger floating particles from the water.

**Biological** filtration promotes and allows the growth of beneficial bacteria. This beneficial bacteria converts ammonia to nitrite and then converts nitrite to nitrate keeping your tank water healthy.

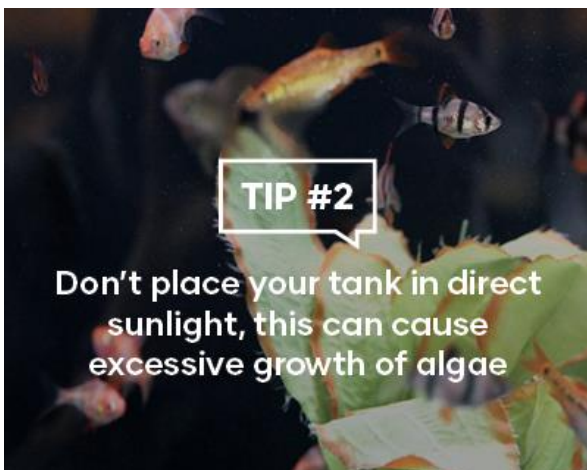
**Chemical** filtration can be used for multiple purposes including removing various impurities and pollutants from the water, but also types of chemical filtration (i.e. activated carbon) can be used to remove specific treatments from the water if the tank has been treated for illnesses.

Other environmental requirements are gravel, plants and places to hide, these can be ornaments, aquatic friendly rocks or driftwood.

Air pumps can also be used to assist in water aeration alongside your standard filtration system, some ornaments may also require an air pump.

Lighting isn't required but it does help to maintain a healthy day/night transition for your fish, helps to control the overgrowth of algae and also shows off your fish.

## Tank Placement



Place your tank in a draft free environment, one that doesn't have great increases or decreases of temperature. Don't place the aquarium in direct sunlight as this can cause excessive growth of algae and can affect the heat of the water. Never use fly spray, air fragrance or other aerosols around your tank, these can be fatal to your fish.

Fish are startled by loud noises and vibrations such as running feet or tapping on the outside of their tank. Place your tank somewhere it will be relatively undisturbed.

Make sure you set your tank up (on a stand) near a power supply and consider the floor or surface strength on which it will sit. Once you fill your tank with water and gravel it will weigh a great deal.

## Habitat Maintenance



For water changes, it is recommended to change 20 - 25% of the water once a week however this can vary if you have a higher bio-load in the tank. It is best to use a gravel syphon for water changes, as it will also vacuum your gravel and remove most of the waste material sitting in it.

To keep your tank looking tip top, clean the inside of the aquarium glass (or acrylic), being sure to use the appropriate cleaning pad so you don't scratch the surfaces. You should also clean your ornaments in fresh water, tidy up your plants, pick off any brown leaves or decaying material.

Top up with chlorine-free water or water that has been treated with a water conditioner. Never completely clean out your whole tank as there are millions of beneficial bacteria which maintain the equilibrium of your tank's health.

Check your filter and replace material as necessary but never all at once. There are packaged dormant bacterial agents, such as Nutrafin Cycle which can be added to your tank to maintain its health. This is definitely a must-add when setting up a new tank or performing a water change.

Test your water's pH, Ammonia, Nitrite and Nitrates weekly initially and then fortnightly.

## Maintenance Checklist

### Daily

- Perform a visual check and make sure fish are healthy and alert
- Check all equipment is working properly
- Remove any dead fish, plants or obvious debris

### Weekly

- Perform 20% - 25% water change
- Clean glass
- Clean light tubes
- Test the water

### Monthly

- Check supplies
- Perform filter maintenance

# Feeding

Due to the huge variety of tropical fish there is also a variety of available foods. There are four main categories of fish food; Goldfish, Tropical, Cichlid and Bottom Feeder food.

For optimum health it is best to feed a variety of high quality pelleted and frozen food. Defrost frozen foods prior to feeding. We feed and recommend Nutrafin Max.

Feeding quantities will vary but never more than they can consume within three to five minutes. Over feeding can cause a polluted, murky and lethal environment for your fish. Check the instructions on the packaged food that you purchase.

## Recommended Supplies

Tank setup

Variety of food

Aquarium only bucket

Gravel

Gravel syphon

Lights

Ornaments

Filter

Water conditioner

Bacterial agent

Nets

Heater and thermometer

Cleaning equipment

Backing paper

Animates care sheets

Multi-plug

Test kit

## Health

**The signs of a healthy fish are:**

- Upright fins
- Clear eyes
- Active and alert
- Feeds well
- Gills should be light pink inside
- Healthy scales with no lesions or sores
- Normal respirations

**The signs of an unhealthy fish are:**

- Gasping at the top of the tank
- Swimming abnormally

- Droopy, torn or frayed fins
- Lesions or cotton wool looking substance on the body

## **Safety**

**These things can be dangerous for your fish:**

- Sharp edged ornaments
- Aerosols
- Metals
- Foreign objects from beaches and rivers
- Glass tapping
- Loud and sudden noises

Always wash your hands (and rinse well) before and after handling your tank contents as items such as perfume or hand cream can be toxic.

## **Tropical Fish Checklist**

**Use this checklist to make sure that tropical fish are right for you and your family:**

- I have the appropriate sized tank that is required.
- I understand that not all tropical species can be housed together.
- I understand that some tropical species are schooling fish and need to be purchased and kept in numbers.
- I can commit to spending up to half hour a day caring for my aquarium.