

CARING FOR....

GOLDFISH



Goldfish are one of the easiest of all fish to keep, but if they are to be kept in an aquarium you must remember that they are totally dependent on you for their welfare.

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Choosing and buying your goldfish

There are many varieties to choose from ranging from the common goldfish to varieties such as: comets, fantails, orandas, lionheads, shubunkins and moors. The varieties can be mixed but all fish should be of a similar size and be compatible for water temperature and feeding habits.

A healthy goldfish 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

Your indoor aquarium should be set up at least one week before introducing any fish to allow the water and filtration system to mature.

INDOOR AQUARIUM - 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 tank containing water.

SETTING UP YOUR TANK - Thoroughly rinse your new tank with clean water. Cover the bottom with carefully washed gravel. You may also wish to add some aquatic ornaments, rocks and plants. Plants will need to be trimmed regularly.

Always use a water conditioner to make the tap water safe. Introduce the fish only when the water quality is suitable. Your retailer will advise you on the number of goldfish you should keep in your chosen set-up. A filtration system is always recommended.

WATER CHANGES - Always use conditioned water. For systems with a filter, carry out regular 25% water changes, with a complete change when necessary. For systems without a filter, change half the water weekly and a complete water change every month.

POOLS AND PONDS - The ideal pond should be at least 2ft (60cm) deep with as big a surface area as is practical. Deep ponds will help the fish to survive hard winters. Large ponds are more likely to achieve a natural balance of plant life that will enable the fish to survive and flourish with the minimum of attention. A large volume of water has a more stable temperature which is beneficial to the fish. Plants help to provide cover and assist oxygenation. They also convert fish wastes which assist with their natural growth. Do not overstock or overfeed. Plants should be thinned out if the cover exceeds 30%.

INTRODUCING YOUR FISH INTO THE TANK - First 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 2 hours.

Feeding and Water

Aquarium Fish - Feed daily according to the manufacturers instructions. Never overfeed.

Pond Fish - Feeding may be necessary only every other day, and still less frequently in winter. Feed according to manufacturers instructions. During the summer there is likely to be natural food.

Handling

Handling fish should be kept to a minimum and cause as little stress as possible. Use a net to catch the fish. Gently corner the fish and then catch it quickly. Place the fish gently in a holding receptacle that contains water from the tank.

General care

Goldfish are normally long-lived and trouble-free. Healthy fish are bright eyed and have a shiny appearance. First signs of distress are usually sluggish movement and drooping of dorsal and/or tail fins.

The most common illnesses are fungal infections of the skin, parasites and constipation.

Loss of scales, split fins and wounds received from predators can cause infection. Usually injuries can be treated with one of the many preparations available for this purpose. Your pet shop or aquatic centre will be pleased to advise you on the many proprietary remedies available for treating fish.

Equipment

There is a great variety of aquaria, ponds, equipment and accessories available to make your hobby more enjoyable. All manufacturers give advice on the installation and maintenance of equipment. It is important that you follow their instructions carefully.

Shopping List - all available from Pets Pad

- Aquarium tank
- Plants
- Filter
- Food
- Gravel

- Pond/Liner
- Rock/Stones
- Remedies and conditioners
- Ornaments
- Book on goldfish

