



The Vet Assured Program includes:

- Specific standards our vendors agree to meet in caring for and observing pets for common illnesses.
- Specific standards for in-store pet care.
- The PetSmart Promise: If your pet becomes ill during the initial 14-day period, or if you're not satisfied for any reason, PetSmart will gladly replace the pet or refund the purchase price.

WATER QUALITY TESTING

PetSmart offers free aquarium water testing. By bringing in a sample of your aquarium water, we can test the quality within minutes.

SAFETY & CLEANLINESS

- Pets may transmit disease to humans; be sure to wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling your pet, their food or cleaning their home. Adults should assist children with hand washing.
- Persons at an increased risk for health concerns (children, pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems, infirm or elderly), should use caution when in contact with the pet or its habitat.
- Do not clean aquariums in the kitchen or food preparation areas.
- Do not release pets into the wild as they most likely will not survive and may impact the native environment.

WATER QUALITY

Water quality is critical to the health of your fish. Items to be monitored include:

pH Level – Normal Range: 6.5–8.2

This is the acid/base activity in the water. Rapid changes in pH are detrimental to fish. The stability of the pH is related to water alkalinity.

Chlorine and Chloramine – Normal Results: 0.0 mg/L

These are found in city water and must be removed for fish. Always use a dechlorinator with new water before adding to an aquarium.

Ammonia – Normal Results: 0.0–0.25 mg/L

Aquariums should have no ammonia present (after they have been cycled). In new aquariums, ammonia neutralizers can be used to lower ammonia levels.

Nitrite – Normal Results: 0.0–0.5 mg/L

You can remove excess nitrite from an aquarium by performing a partial water change. Adding salt to the water at 0.1-0.3% (1-3 teaspoons of aquarium salt per gallon of water) also reduces nitrite toxicity.

Nitrate – Normal Range: 0–40 mg/L

If nitrate levels exceed 40 mg/L, water changes can be used to lower the concentration.

Hardness – Normal Range: 100–250 mg/L

Water with high hardness usually has a high pH. Softening the water will lower the pH.

Alkalinity – Normal Range: 120–300 mg/L

With low alkalinity water, your aquarium may experience sudden and deadly pH shifts. Increase the alkalinity of the water to stabilize the pH.

Temperature – Normal Range: 74–82° F (23–28° C)

Use an aquarium heater to maintain stable water temperatures.

This Care Guide contains general information regarding the proper care of your pet, but is not comprehensive.

For more information, visit petsmart.com or see additional Aquatic Care Guides.



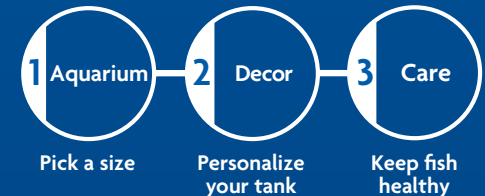
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SETTING UP AN AQUARIUM



Fish sold at PetSmart are divided into five different communities of fish that can live with other fish in the same community. These compatibility groups are Goldfish, African Cichlids, South American Cichlids, Semi-Aggressive Fish, and Tropical Community Fish. Look at the label under each aquarium to identify the community of fish in that aquarium. Select fish from the same compatibility group to ensure they get along with the fish in your home aquarium.

Shop for your fish in 3 Simple Steps



PetSmart® Care Guides were developed and approved by PetSmart veterinarians. For more information on the care of pets, visit

petsmart.com/careguides

STEP 1 Aquarium

The aquarium should be set up and filled with water at least one day before adding any fish.

Aquarium and Stand

- Determine the location of your aquarium. Be sure it's near a power source, but out of direct sunlight and drafts.
- Place your rinsed-out tank on an aquarium stand designed to support the weight of a filled aquarium (aquariums weigh as much as 10 lbs. per gallon).

STEP 2 Decor

- Rinse the gravel and decor in a clean container before adding it to the aquarium. Use 1.5 lbs. (680 g) of gravel for every gallon (4 L) of tank capacity to make a 2-3" (5-8 cm) layer on the bottom.
- If using an undergravel filter, place it in the bottom of the tank first and cover it with gravel.
- Fill 1/3 of the tank with water treated with dechlorinator or water conditioner.
- Place rocks, decorations, thermometer and plants in desired locations.

Filtration, Heat and Lights

- Position heater so the water flow from the filter will mix the heated water throughout the aquarium. Wait for 15 minutes after filling tank with water before plugging in heater.
- The general rule for aquarium heaters is five watts of power for each gallon. For large aquariums, it is best to divide this into two heaters, one at each end of the tank.
- Tropical fish require water temperatures ranging between 74-82° F (23-28° C).
- Fill remaining 2/3 of the aquarium with dechlorinated water.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions to set up filtration. The filter should be able to process all of the water in the aquarium 3-5 times per hour. (e.g., A filter for a 20-gallon aquarium should filter 60-100 gallons of water per hour.)
- Place hood/light on tank and turn on for 8 to 12 hours per day.
- Run the filter for at least 24 hours and adjust the heater to the appropriate temperature.

STEP 3 Care

Adding Fish

After you have properly set up your aquarium, follow these steps:

1. Determine how many fish your tank can handle. Keep in mind the following:
 - One gallon of water for every 1" of full-grown Tropical Fish.
 - Two gallons of water for every 1" of full-grown Goldfish or large fish such as Cichlids.
2. Only add about three new fish at a time so they don't overload the bio-filtration capacity.
 - Take fish home immediately after purchasing.
 - Float the sealed bag of fish in the tank for 15 minutes to allow water temperatures to equalize.
 - Remove the bag and net the fish out of the bag. Carefully add the fish to their new home. Avoid adding bag water to the aquarium.
3. Feed the new fish one to two hours after adding them to the aquarium.
 - It is very important not to overfeed your fish, as this is one of the most common mistakes.

Aquarium Maintenance

Weekly

- Remove 10% of the water and replace with dechlorinated water.
- Test water quality in new aquariums.
- Scrub algae from tank and prune live plants, if necessary.

Monthly

- Vacuum gravel and replace 25% of water with dechlorinated water.
- Test water quality in established aquariums.
- Perform filter maintenance (i.e., replace filter cartridge, replace carbon, rinse pre-filter, etc.).

STEP 3 Care *continued*

Aquarium Cycling

Your aquarium is a delicately balanced ecosystem dependent on the completion of the nitrogen cycle. The good bacteria that grow in the gravel and filter of your aquarium break down the unhealthy fish waste (ammonia and nitrite) within the water, turning them into non-toxic nitrate.

1. Seed the aquarium with beneficial bacteria by using a cycling aid product.
- Biological supplements help grow the beneficial bacteria that break down fish wastes. The beneficial bacteria can make the water initially become cloudy.
2. Stock your aquarium with fish slowly; never add more than three fish to your aquarium per week.
3. Do not overcrowd your tank. This is sure to lead to toxic ammonia levels.
4. Frequently test levels of pH, ammonia, nitrite and nitrate. Perform a partial water change if the levels are abnormal.

