



**GOLDFISH** - Are a great beginner fish and always popular due to the fact they are easy to look after and are relatively hardy. They come in many varieties and we generally stock Comets, Nymphs, Fantails, Blackmoories and Shubunkins. Goldfish live in cold water and can handle extremes of temperature.

**TROPICAL FISH** - We sell many varieties and can advise on the right mix for your aquarium. Tropical fish need warm water conditions and therefore a heater is a necessity. They take the same amount of care as a goldfish and once the heater is in place and set at around 26 degrees, it will work to keep the water temperature there. A thermometer is recommended as a backup to ensure this.

### **BOWLS, TANKS & AQUARIUMS**

In simple terms - the larger the volume of water the more stable it is and easier it is to maintain. A goldfish "bowl" has a relatively small surface area for oxygen to pass into the water; therefore it's only suitable for one or two goldfish. Minimum bowl size needed would be 10 litres without a filter. A 10 litre tank with a filter would accommodate 2 goldfish comfortably. A large tank on the other hand is far more suitable for a number of goldfish because it has a larger surface area and greater volume of water. If a suitable filter is added, it greatly increases the water quality on any tank and therefore reduces the work involved in keeping the fish's environment healthy. Our complete set ups often include the tank and filter, along with food, water conditioner and often gravel and a background scene. Lighting can be incorporated in the tank or a clip on light purchased separately.

### **EQUIPMENT**

Apart from your tank, you will require Food, Water conditioner, Gravel, A Gravel Vacuum, Filter, Water Test Kits and a net. Lighting is optional, however will enhance any tank. A heater and thermometer is required for tropical fish. Air pumps can be connected to ornaments for aeration, helping to keep fish more active and healthy. You also may want to add live or plastic plants and some ornaments and a background scene to attach to the exterior of the tank.

### **SETTING UP YOUR AQUARIUM:**

We advise you set up your aquarium 3 days to 1 week before purchasing fish.

Wash any gravel and ornaments before putting in the tank. Once you have positioned your tank and filled with water, add the appropriate amount of water conditioners and let the filter run. This is called establishing the "Biological Cycle" as it allows good bacteria to get started in your tank to make a healthy environment before adding fish.

Placement of the aquarium is important for maintaining the right water conditions - avoid close proximity to windows, heaters, air conditioners & doorways to avoid fluctuating temperatures. Too much light entering the tank/bowl will greatly accelerate the growth of algae on rocks, plants and ornaments and discolour the water making it go green.

It is suggested to do a PH test before adding fish to make sure you don't need to adjust the water conditions.

When you are ready to purchase the fish, they will be placed with suitable water into a plastic bag with enough air to last for a couple of hours, while you transport them home. Always sit the plastic bag in the tanks water for 15 to 20mins so that the temperature can adjust - then scoop the fish out of the plastic bag with a net and place in the aquarium.

**WATER CONDITIONS:** The chemistry of the water in your aquarium is critical to the health of your fish. Not only is it the environment they live in, but it is also what they breathe so you must make sure the water is as close to perfect as you can get it. A neutral Ph value of 7 or slightly higher is a safe range to aim for. Most pH kits are very affordable and are made for multiple tests - they come with clear instructions and can be purchased with or without ph adjusters.

Tap water has chemicals the authorities add to destroy various harmful bacteria - this will also seriously harm your fish and so it must be neutralised with an aquarium water conditioner or "water-ager". Get the water right and you are going to have very few problems - do not underestimate how important this is to the health of your fish.

To remove chlorine we suggest adding Prime, Stress Coat or Quick Start. Stability, Stress Zyme or Tetras Easy Balance will help to set up the correct biological conditions needed.

**TANK MAINTENANCE:** Regular water changes are required every 1 to 2 weeks to remove dissolved fish waste. If you have a filtration system, turn it off well before water change to allow waste to settle. Wash any filter media in water removed from the tank and wipe glass with an algae scraper or magnet to clean. A gravel vacuum can remove the dirty water from the bottom of the tank where debris gathers on the gravel. It is advised to siphon out 25 to 30% of the water. Never completely empty the tank - it's always best to do small water changes that will be less stressful on the fish and their environment.

Once all cleaned and filter material replaced, top the tank back up with clean water that has already been treated with water conditioners.

**FEEDING:** Remember that numerous fish die from over-feeding and very few starve to death! You should feed your goldfish a small amount of food every day - enough that they eat it all within 2 to 3 seconds.

DO NOT feed them 2 to 3 times a day, as suggested on the food containers. If food remains uneaten it will decay and pollute the water and ultimately kill the fish.

**HEALTH:** The following factors can affect the health of your fish:

1. Lack of regular water changes.
2. Extremes of pH value either side of 7.
3. Water hardness - take a sample to your PIAA aquarist in the pet shop or aquarium.
4. Incorrect feeding - only you know if you over or under-feed.
5. Water contamination - household cleaning agents, fly spray, contaminated hands in the tank, etc.
6. Recent temperature fluctuations.
7. Over-crowding.

Fish problems that commonly affect aquarium fish can be simply divided into five groups:

- a) Environments - see previous list
- b) Fungus - is always secondary infection caused by incorrect water conditions, physical damage, or some other disease. Treat by fixing original cause, then medicate with fungus cure.
- c) White Spot - a common fish parasite appearing like little specks of salt over the fins and body; easy to cure. Treat with White Spot remedy.
- d) Bacterial diseases. Appear as if fins and body are rotting away, often accompanied by white slimy appearance around the mouth, back and back of tail. Treatment: only a few preparations are available that specifically treat aquarium fish bacterial diseases. Ask the advice of your pet shop and ensure the label states it treats bacterial diseases.
- e) Parasitic diseases. Caused by microscopic skin parasites causing fish to scratch on sand, plants or rocks. Fish appear pale in colour and fins often fray in the latter stage of the disease. Ensure label of medication states it will treat most external skin parasites.