

AQUARIUM ENVIRONMENTS

Here are a few of the different aquarium environments. In general fish of different environments should not be mixed; this is because of different water conditions, temperature ranges, and aggression levels.

These are guidelines for the most common fish. If you need information for a specific fish the best thing to do is ask a fish room person or do an internet search to find how big it will get, aggression levels, any special conditions, etc. for that fish.

GOLDFISH

- Native to East Asia.
- Rule for number of goldfish in a tank is **1 inch per 2-3 gallons**.
- Most varieties can get up to a foot long or longer.
- Do not require a heater, room temperature is ok.
 - Temperature should be **68-72°F**, the temperature needs to be consistent.
- Generally **hardy fish** and will all get along although it's best to house slim bodies together and fat bodies (fantails) together.
- **Dirty**, make sure there is adequate filtration and do water changes more regularly.
- They will do best on Goldfish flakes or pellets.
- Be careful not to over feed, they will never stop eating and always appear hungry.
- Larger gravel is better, they like to forage at the bottom and will often eat gravel and spit it out, small gravel could be swallowed causing impaction.
- They will eat most live plants, Cryptocoryne and Anubias do best.



TROPICAL COMMUNITY

- **1 inch of fish per gallon** rule applies to these type of fish.
- They will generally get 1-6 inches long.
- **Require a heater** and temperature between **75 – 80°F** (24 - 27°C).
- A pH level around 7 is the best but they will tolerate from 6.5-8.0.
- Tetras, barbs, rasboras, corydoras catfish, danios, livebearers, loaches, rainbowfish, and plecostamus will all generally live together with no problems (as long as the tank isn't overcrowded).
- Providing lots of plants and ornaments is recommended so that fish have places to hide.

MID-TOP SWIMMERS

These types of fish will spend the majority of their time in the middle to top region of the tank. They will eat flake or pelleted food, and most of the smaller types of frozen food (bloodworms, etc.).

TETRAS (NON TO LOW AGGRESSIVE)

- Freshwater fish from Africa, South & Central America.
- Sizes from 0.5 – 3 inches, the larger tetras can be fin nippers.
- They are all very peaceful.
- Very good starter fish except for a few exceptions (smaller tetras like neons, cardinals are not a good choice for starters).
- Like to be in groups of 6 or more, but they must be the same kind.



Serpae Tetra

RASBORAS AND DANIOS (NON-AGGRESSIVE)

- Freshwater fish from South East Asia and Africa.
- Will get to about 3 inches long.
- Prefer schools of 10 or more.
- Are fast swimmers and enjoy a good current from a filter or airstone.
- Peaceful fish and generally do not attack or nip other fish.



Leopard Danio

LIVEBEARERS – PLATIES, MOLLIES, AND SWORDTAILS (NON-AGGRESSIVE)

- Give birth to live fry, adults will eat young so they must be quarantined.
- Will get about 3 inches long.
- Should be in groups of 3 or more, with a 2 female to 1 male ratio.
- You can tell males from females by the anal fin, the fin on the bottom side of the fish right in front of the tail fin. Females it will be fanned out and males it will be a tube.



Gold Wag Platy

GUPPIES (NON TO LOW AGGRESSIVE)

- Also livebearers, fry should be quarantined to avoid being eaten by adults.
- Get about 1-2 inches long.
- Can be fin nippers.
- Lots of different colors.
- Males vs. Females same as other live bearers.



Guppy

BARBS (LOW-MEDIUM AGGRESSIVE)

- Freshwater fish from Africa and Asia.
- Most will get about 3 inches long.
- Like to be in schools of 5 or more.
- They are known fin nippers so should not be kept with slower fish that have long fins such as angelfish and gouramis.



Tiger Barb

RAINBOWFISH (LOW-MEDIUM AGGRESSIVE)

- Size from 3-7 inches fully grown.
- Should not be put in tanks with smaller fish or slow fish with long fins.
- Are very colorful and fast.
- Should be in schools of 6 or more.



Rainbowfish

GOURAMIS (LOW-MEDIUM AGGRESSIVE)

- Get along with most community fish, males can be fin nippers to other fish with longer fins.
- Males may fight each other especially in a crowded tank.
- Grow up to 6 inches long, dwarf gouramis will get about 3 inches.
- From South East Asia.
- Have a special “labyrinth” organ that allows them to breathe air.



Gourami

SHARKS (NON-LOW AGGRESSIVE)

- Not actually sharks but Asian species of minnows.
- Some species can get up to 14 inches long.
- Prefer to be in schools of 6 or more.
- Quite peaceful despite their name.



Bala Shark

BOTTOM DWELLERS

These types of fish will spend most the time at the bottom scavenging for food and eating algae.

LOACHES (LOW-MEDIUM AGGRESSIVE)

- Best if kept in groups of 5 or more.
- Large range in size
 - Kuhli loach 4 inches
 - Yoyo loach 6 inches
 - Clown loach 18 inches
- Larger loaches should not be kept with smaller fish.
- Eat leftover food and some types of algae, can be supplemented with sinking wafers or pellets.



Clown Loach



Kuhli Loach

CORYDORAS CATFISH (NON-AGGRESSIVE)

- Get about 2-3 inches long.
- Eat leftover food and some types of algae, can be supplemented with sinking wafers or pellets.
- Preferably kept in groups of 3 or more.



Julii Corydoras

PLECOSTAMUS (NON TO LOW AGGRESSIVE)

- Can get 3-18 inches long depending on the species.
- As long as they are well fed are very peaceful, will mostly eat algae and any leftover food. Can be supplemented with algae wafers.



Plecostamus

- Have armor like skin so they can go into tanks with more aggressive fish, although some cichlids, Oscars, and piranhas will still be able to attack and kill them. Providing lots of cover and placing an adequate sized pleco will give the best chance.
- Do not need to be in groups.

OTOCINLUS

- Dwarf catfish, up to 2 inches long.
- Better in groups of 3 or more.
- Will mostly eat algae and any leftover food. Can be supplemented with algae wafers.
- Very peaceful, should not be put in tanks with other larger fish.



Otocinclus

SNAILS

- Some snails are beneficial and some are pests, and some can even be used as food.
- Trumpet, apple (can get tennis ball sized), and mystery snails are beneficial; they will eat leftover food and dead plant matter cleaning the tank.
- There are also small feeder snails which loaches and puffer fish like to eat.
- Good tank mates are peaceful fish such as tetras and guppies.



Apple Snail

ASSASSIN SNAIL

- These snails will eat leftover fish food but preferably other snails that are smaller to the same size of the assassin snail.
- They are not harmful to fish.
- Often a good solution to a snail infestation.
- Stay small, only reach about ½ inch long.



Assassin Snail

AFRICAN CICHLIDS

- Come mainly from 3 lakes in Africa, Lake Malawi and Lake Tanganyika, and Lake Victoria. Species from different lakes generally do not do well together. **NOT** community fish – very aggressive.
- Because they are more aggressive an aquarium should only have 1 inch of fish per 2-3 gallons.
- Most species will grow from 4-8 inches, some species up to 20 inches.
- There are hundreds of species, some will get along and some will be very aggressive with each other. Doing research for a particular species is the best way to determine what it can and can't be mixed with.
- Should be in groups of 3 or 4 with 1 male and 2-3 females.
Groups must be the same species
- Lots of rockwork and places to hide, re-arrange when adding new fish or if fish are becoming too aggressive (territorial).
- Heater required, temperature range of 74 - 80°F
- A fine substrate or sand is recommended, they like to dig. Live plants are not recommended.
- pH levels: Lake Malawi 7.4 - 8.6, Lake Tanganyika 7.8 - 9.0
- Plecos are the best choice for algae eater, but because of African Cichlids aggressive nature they still may be attacked and killed. Getting a good size pleco will help.
- Will eat predator sticks and live food, as well as frozen food.



Electric Yellow Cichlid



Iwanda Cichlid

SOUTH AMERICAN CICHLIDS

- pH range 6.5-7.
- Temperature range 76-83°F.
- Huge variety, some are community fish whereas some are aggressive and can't be put in a community tank.

ANGELFISH (LOW-MEDIUM AGGRESSIVE)

- Very popular because of their long flowing fins.
- Can get about 6 inches long and 12 inches tall.

- Are compatible in most community tanks with low to medium aggressive fish. Avoid smaller tetras and any known fin nippers such as rainbowfish and barbs.
- Will eat tropical fish flakes or pellets, along with smaller frozen foods.



Angelfish

SOUTH AMERICAN CICHLIDS (HIGH AGGRESSIVE)

- Not as aggressive as African cichlids but still quite aggressive.
- Should be put in tanks with other similar sized South American cichlids, can be mixed with other more aggressive fish as long as they are similar sized.
- Will eat predator stick or frozen food. Depending on their size will also eat live food.
- Some common species are Green Terror, Parrotfish, Jack Dempsy, and Convict Cichlid.



Parrotfish

OSCARS (VERY AGGRESSIVE)

- Can get up to 2 feet long.
- Require a large tank (100 gallons for full grown).
- Eat almost anything, are quite messy.
- Very aggressive, kept with one another or alone.
- Temperature range of 78-83°F, pH 6.5-7.5
- Amazon swords are the best live plants to keep with Oscars (still might get uprooted).



Red Tiger Oscar

AQUATIC FROGS

AFRICAN DWARF FROG

- Will grow to about 1 ½ inches long.
- Good in a community tank with the following exceptions:
 - African clawed frog
 - Newt
 - Large fish
 - Aggressive fish
 - Larger Goldfish
 - Plecostamus
 - Crayfish
 - Turtles



Dwarf Frog

- They will eat frozen or freeze dried bloodworms.
- They might jump out of the aquarium (keep water level slightly lower than normal).

ALBINO/REGULAR CLAWED FROG

- Will get 4-5 inches long.
- They have much more bulgy eyes than the dwarf frogs.
- They will eat small fish or anything that fits in their mouth. They should not be kept with small fish.
- They are scavengers so will eat leftover fish food.
- They might jump out of the aquarium (keep water level slightly lower than normal).



Albino Clawed Frog

HERMIT CRAB

- Can live up to 30 years if properly cared for although average is 1-2 years.
- 10 gallon tanks work best for enclosure, this size will fit 2-4 crabs.
- Sand and/or plantation soil substrate, should be about 2 inches deep (enough for crab to burrow).
- 72-80°F, using under tank heaters and/or heating lights for half of the tank.
- Provide a day/night cycle.
- Humidity must stay between 70-80%. If humidity in the tank is low a damp sponge can help.
- Water dishes should be shallow and sturdy, one fresh water and the other one salt water (use aquarium salt).
- Food dish with pellets & veggies.
- Pelleted foods should be fed once a day and can be crushed for smaller crabs.
- Fresh foods should be fed in small amounts and varied.
 - Mango, papaya, coconut, apples, apple sauce, bananas, grapes, carrots, spinach, fish flake food, watercress, leafy green lettuces (not iceberg), broccoli, cooked eggs, freeze dried shrimp and plankton.
- Avoid milk products and citrus fruits
- They require a lot of calcium especially during molting.



- Cuttlebone, vitamin supplements, oyster shell
- When a crab is molting do not touch it as it is painful for the crab.
- If you get pinched you need to stay perfectly still and the crab will think it's pinching the ground and let go.

SHRIMP

- Shrimp require very similar care to tropical community fish with a few differences.
 - Shrimp are very sensitive to copper, using Fluval shrimp safe will remove copper and other heavy metals from the water.
 - Shrimp are more sensitive to ammonia and nitrite so regular water changes must be done.
 - Shrimp prefer moderately hard water and a pH of 6.8-8.0. Fluval Mineral Supplement can be used to create perfect water conditions.
- Shrimp are algae eaters and will nibble on live plants, shrimp granules should be fed to provide a complete diet.
- Fluval Ebi tank is the best choice for shrimp.
- They require temperatures of 18-25°C and adequate filtration.
- They will grow from 1 – 2 inches long.



Crystal Red Shrimp