

# The McPet Shop

## FISH

### 1. THE AQUARIUM:

When choosing your aquarium there are two main criteria, how much space you have available and how much you wish to spend. You must remember the following points when deciding which size to choose:

- a) An aquarium when full of water is very heavy. Make sure the supporting shelf; tabletop or floor joists are strong enough to hold the weight. 500 litres of water (a 4'x2'x2' tank) weighs half a tonne.
- b) The aquarium should be sited away from direct light and direct heat, i.e. away from windows and radiators.
- c) The larger the aquarium you choose the more expensive the accompanying equipment will be.
- d) You should choose the largest aquarium you can afford.

### 2. THE FILTER:

An aquarium filter is designed to clean the water mechanically (physically taking the particles of dirt out of the water) and to clean the water biologically (providing growth media for bacteria which can eat the pollution the fish create).

There are many different types of aquarium filters and they are listed below with their pros and cons.

- a) **Undergravel filter**
  - Cheapest of all filters
  - Hidden almost completely out of sight
  - Available for all sizes of aquarium
  - High maintenance as the dirt is trapped in the gravel and has to be cleaned manually every four to six weeks.
  - Causes a disturbance in the aquarium when cleaning
  - Needs an air pump for operation and can be expensive
- b) **Internal power filter**
  - Very low maintenance
  - Small and unobtrusive
  - Many of the new models include venturi which introduces air into the aquarium therefore avoiding the need for an air pump
  - Available for many sizes of aquarium
  - Causes a little disturbance when cleaning
  - Can be expensive
- c) **External power filters**
  - Sited outside of the aquarium, i.e., in a cabinet. Therefore completely out of sight
  - Very low maintenance
  - No disturbance when cleaning
  - Able to house many different types of filter media
  - Available with a venturi so no air pump required
  - Very expensive
  - Some models are difficult to seal and are prone to leakage.

### 3. HEATER THERMOSTAT:

These are only necessary in a tropical aquarium. They are available for all aquarium sizes. They will regulate as well as heat the aquarium water. It is ideal to install two heaters in case one fails.

### 4. AIR PUMP:

An air pump is designed to introduce air into your aquarium. Unless you have this facility on your filter, an air pump is essential. As well as satisfying your fishes' need for oxygen, bubbling air produces an attractive display.

### 5. LIGHTING:

Lighting is not essential but improves the look of your aquarium. It is available in the form of a fluorescent tube and starter unit. The tubes will give either pink or white light, the former enhances plant colour while the latter enhances fish colour. You must choose the correct wattage of starter motor to match your fluorescent tube.

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- DECORATION:** There are many types of decoration available and the type you choose depends on personal choice. Check with The McPet Shop staff that the types of decoration you choose are suitable for freshwater aquariums as some are only for use with saltwater.

### Introducing fish into your aquarium

Special care needs to be taken when introducing fish into your aquarium or pond. Follow the guidelines below to ensure your fish are introduced to their new home with the minimum amount of stress.

- Check your water quality.**

Before going into The McPet Shop to purchase your new fish you should check the water quality in your aquarium.

You should test the temperature, pH Nitrite and Ammonia. If any of these are unacceptable you should ask your local The McPet Shop store for advice before adding any new fish.

- Transport the fish carefully.**

When transporting your tropical fish from The McPet Shop to their new home make sure the fish bag is kept warm and away from drafts. The bag should be held firmly and should not be allowed to roll around.

- Prepare the Aquarium.**

When home, you should prepare your tank for its new arrival.

(a) Turn the lights off and leave them off for about three hours.

(b) Make sure there are plenty of hiding places for the new fish until it has settled into its new home.

- Introduce the fish.**

When your tank is ready you can introduce the fish. Float the fish, in its bag, in the aquarium – the air in the bag will keep it afloat. Leave it like this for about 15 minutes, this will help equalise the temperatures. Next, open the bag and add some aquarium water (about as half as much as is already in the bag). Again leave the bag like this for another 15 minutes. At this point the water temperatures have equalised the fish and water can be gently poured into the aquarium.

- Medicate the aquarium.**

During transportation fish can become stressed, and their immune system inoperative. In this situation diseases such as white spot and fungus may occur. It is important therefore; that now the fish is in its new home the tank is treated with a general medication.

- Watch your new arrival.**

For the next couple of days watch your new arrival to ensure it has settled in well. You should check that the new fish is not being bullied or bullying the other fish and that it is eating well. If you have any problems you should contact your local The McPet Shop.

### Fish Keeping HINTS and TIPS

The following guidelines should ensure worry free fish keeping in either your pond or aquarium. If you have any other queries, please ask your local The McPet Shop store.

- Always stock your aquarium or pond slowly, adding many fish in one go will overload the tank or pond and cause pollution levels to rise.**
- Always test your water at regular intervals. It should be tested for temperature, pH nitrite, ammonia and nitrate. These test kits can be purchased from The McPet Shop.**
- Stress is one of the main causes of fish losses and disease outbreaks. Stick to the following rules and your fish should enjoy a stress free environment.**
  - Never overstock your aquarium.
  - Never let your water quality become unacceptable
  - Never bang on the glass of your aquarium or throw large stones into your pond.
  - Make sure the fish are disturbed as little as possible
  - Before you buy your fish make sure they are compatible
- Watch your fish as often as possible. You will be able to spot early signs of disease, aggressive behaviour or stress and take preventative steps.**
- Make sure you feed your fish a varied diet. This should include dried flake or pellet food and some live food once a week. As a guide one small goldfish should eat one flake of food twice a day. Any dried food, which is left in the tank after ten minutes, should be taken out.**

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6. Filter cleaning and water changes must be done at regular intervals. It depends on the size of the aquarium, size and type of filter, type and number of fish you have as to how often maintenance should be carried out. You should ask your local The McPet Shop store for advice.