

Freshwater Aquarium Fish: A Guide To Keeping Them

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Perspective

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Freshwater fish are one of the most popular of all tank-suitable fish. They are fairly easy to keep, and are great for beginners. Freshwater fish divide into two sections - cold-water and tropical. In this article we shall be looking just at one section - freshwater fish. If you are looking up marine fish, then try Marine Aquaria.

Filters

There are several forms of filter: an internal filter, an external filter, and an undergravel filter.

The undergravel filter was popular in the 80's, but now is rarely used because it does not filter powerfully enough, and is difficult to maintain. However, some fishkeepers like to use it in conjunction with other filters.

The internal filter is the most popular type: It is usually a small box with foam cartridges in it. The water is sucked in through the grills, gets filtered through the foam, and exits from the nozzle at the top. These are fairly easy to maintain, and many have extra features such as metres indicating when cleaning is due, venturi valves (to let oxygen into the water), and carbon or polyester filter pads. These filters are tough and durable: They should last you a long time.

Finally, the external filter: these are usually very expensive (£50-£150), but are by far the best to get, especially if you have lots of fish and plants, and are much easier to clean and maintain.

Heater

Once you have chosen a filter, you can decide which heater to buy. If you are getting coldwater fish such as goldfish, you will not need one, but these are a must for any tropical tank. They help keep the water at the right temperature for your fish-too cold and your fish might die, too hot and there won't be enough oxygen in the water for them to breathe.

Tank

Once you've chosen your heater, think about a tank. Make sure the heater and filter are the right size for your tank: if you want a large or small aquarium you may need to change the size of your equipment. Get some gravel, some ornaments, maybe a few plants, and anything else which your local shop might recommend. Don't forget to buy a test kit, to monitor the health of the water, and some water treatment: you don't want your fish being killed by untreated tap water.

Preparing the Tank

When you get home, rinse the gravel in a bucket to remove any dirt and gently pour it into your tank. Fill the tank up about halfway with water. Put the plants and ornaments in at this stage.

Next, fill the aquarium up the rest of the way. When you have filled up to the level stated by the manufacturer, add your filter and heater. Follow the instructions in their boxes to make sure you don't do anything wrong. Finally, when all this is complete, add in your water treatment. This will remove any dangerous chemicals from your tap water which may stress or kill the fish. Some places have water that is not typical and before simply following the instruction on the water treatment container, get advice on the correct rate for your area.