

*If in doubt contact your
OATA
retail member
for further information*

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

ALWAYS PURCHASE test kits and regularly check the water for ammonia, nitrite, nitrate and pH. This will allow you to ensure that the water in your aquarium is not causing welfare problems for your fish.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE for testing the water in your aquarium. Record your results to enable you to highlight fluctuations quickly. Also check the temperature of the water.

MAINTAIN the water in the aquarium within the accepted parameters highlighted in this leaflet. You may need to undertake regular water changes to achieve this.

ALWAYS wash your hands, making sure to rinse off all soap residues, before putting them into your aquarium or pond. Wash them again afterwards and certainly before eating, drinking or smoking.

NEVER siphon by mouth. A fish tank can harbour bacteria which can be harmful if swallowed. Purchase a specially designed aquarium gravel cleaner which can be started without the need to place the siphon in your mouth.

NEVER RELEASE YOUR AQUARIUM ANIMALS OR PLANTS INTO THE WILD.

Never release an animal or plant bought for a home aquarium into the wild. It is illegal and for most fancy goldfish this will lead to an untimely and possibly lingering death as they are not native to this country. Any fish or plants that do survive might be harmful to the environment.

Checklist...

Equipment:

- Aquarium
- Gravel cleaner
- Water test kit
- Tap water conditioner
- Gravel
- Filter
- Food

Before purchase ensure that:

- The aquarium is of a suitable size.
- Water parameters are as advised in this care leaflet.



ORNAMENTAL AQUATIC TRADE ASSOCIATION LTD

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**How to
care for...**



Fancy Goldfish

Introduction...

The Goldfish (*Carassius auratus*) was one of the first animals to be domesticated and was derived from a variety of carp, which could be found in rivers and lakes in the wild throughout Asia.

Fancy goldfish can be found in many different varieties, colours and shapes. With many different types such as the Ranchu, Black Moor and Lionhead to name a few.

Fancy Goldfish are not as hardy as ordinary goldfish and should normally be kept indoors.

Water requirements...

Fancy goldfish are intolerant of poor water conditions. It is recommended that the water parameters stay within the following guidelines although they can acclimatise to a wider range of temperature, pH and hardness over a period:

Temperature: between 4-25°C (the aquarium should be kept away from heat and draughts to reduce fluctuations)

pH: 6.0-8.0

Ammonia: 0mg/l (0.02mg/l may be tolerated for short periods)

Nitrite: 0mg/l (0.2mg/l may be tolerated for short periods)

Hardness: moderately soft - hard (5-19°dH)

Biology...

All goldfish including fancies belong to the family Cyprinidae.

Body length: maximum 47cm, however in an aquarium they are unlikely to grow beyond 20cm total length.

Longevity: in a well maintained aquarium with good water quality there are many reports of fish living 6-8 years, and even up to 20 years!

The different types of fancies can be identified by the alterations in body form e.g. Ranchus have deep bodies, Pearlscales are the only Goldfish to have altered scale shape. Ask your retailer about the other varieties available.

During spawning season, males can be identified by tubercles (white spots) which can be found on the pectoral fins and opercula (gill covers), whilst females are often more rounded in the body.

Aquarium requirements...

If purchasing a small aquarium for small goldfish, be prepared to upgrade the aquarium as they grow. Whilst keeping goldfish in smaller aquaria is possible, remember that the bigger the aquarium, the more stable the environmental conditions such as temperature and water quality. Whatever the size, a filter is always essential.

The tank should also have gravel and ideally live plants, which provide food and shelter. If live plants are not used, then the addition of plastic plants and ornaments is recommended as this supplies the fish with shelter.

A heater is not required for goldfish unless they are kept in a very cold room. Although goldfish are coldwater fish, they do not tolerate fluctuations in their water temperature which can cause stress and lead to disease. Thus, their aquarium should not be situated near any draughts or heat sources.

Lighting is recommended. If no lighting is added to the tank then ensure the room is bright enough.

Water testing kits are essential as goldfish can be very dirty, which can lead to increased levels of ammonia and nitrite. Water should be checked on a regular basis to ensure it does not slip below the standards mentioned previously.

Maintenance...

At least once every two weeks, a partial water change of 25-30% is strongly recommended (a siphon device is useful to remove waste from the gravel). The water should be tested regularly to ensure that pollutants such as ammonia and nitrites don't build up. Ensure that you treat all replacement water with tap water conditioner or allow the replacement water to stand or aerate it to remove any chlorine present before adding it to the aquarium.

Filters should be checked for clogging and blockages. If the filter needs cleaning, then do not run it under the tap as any chlorine present may kill the beneficial bacterial population that has established in the media. Instead, it can be rinsed in the tank water which is removed during a partial water change as this reduces the amount of bacteria which are lost.

Good husbandry is essential as these fish can be stressed by even the smallest amounts of ammonia and nitrite. Test the water to monitor the ammonia, nitrite and nitrate levels every week, especially during initial set-up and after adding extra fish.

Feeding...

Goldfish are opportunistic feeders in the wild and will take most food types. In the home aquarium, they should be fed with a good quality flake or pellet. Goldfish require more carbohydrates than most other fish species so specialised goldfish food should be fed. They are insatiable feeders and will constantly look for food. Try not to over feed though as this can lead to a build up of uneaten food which breaks down releasing toxic waste in the tank. The use of a sinking pellet can help to reduce swim bladder imbalances as these are often associated with gulping air whilst feeding at the surface.

Goldfish should only be fed what they can eat within a few minutes 1-2 times a day. Remove any uneaten food to reduce waste build up.

Common problems...

Water quality problems will affect fish behaviour and can be shown by clamped fins, reduced feeding, erratic swimming and gasping at the surface. Immediately test the water if any of these symptoms are shown.

If in doubt ask your retailer for advice.

Compatibility...

All varieties of Fancy goldfish will live together happily. If you wish to add any other species ask advice from your retailer.

It is not advisable to keep fancy goldfish with comet goldfish. More often than not, the comets can outcompete the fancy goldfish for food. In some cases there are reports of boisterous comets fin nipping the slower swimming fancy varieties.

Breeding...

Goldfish can be successfully bred in large home aquariums. Breeding is more likely to occur if they are kept in a ratio of 2 males : 1 female. Spawning can be induced through slowly raising of the temperature to approximately 20°C.

Males will chase the females in a courtship display. The fish will lay eggs in plants or a spawning mop which should be removed afterwards as goldfish will rapidly eat their offspring. If successful breeding has taken place then the eggs will hatch within three days and dark coloured fry should be seen swimming within a few days.