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Bringing Your Betta Fish Home

The betta fish, also known as the Siamese fighting fish, is a popular freshwater fish because of its brilliant colors and relatively easy care. Taking care of your betta fish does entail some special considerations that are unique to betta fish in order to keep him or her happy and healthy.

Things You Will Need:

- Small Tank - Your betta will be fine in a small tank or bowl, but the larger it is, the happier he will be.
- Betta Fish Food
- Aquarium Gravel
- A Fish Net
- Water Conditioner

Optional Recommendations:

- Live or Plastic Plant
- Ornament for Decoration
- Aquarium Thermometer Sticker
- Safe & Easy (Fish-safe glass cleaner)



The Water

There are three obvious options when filling the tank with water.

1. *Tap water* is generally safe for your betta fish, but is high recommended to add a couple drops of water conditioner (removes chlorine & make water Betta safe) before adding your betta.
2. *Bottled water* is recommended if you are not going to add water conditioner to the water.
3. *Distilled water* should be avoided.

The temperature of the water is also important, as the betta fish is considered a tropical fish. Water between 72 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit is ideal. One way to tell if the water is too hot or too cold is by watching the betta fish's behavior. A sluggish, listless fish is likely too cold and a hyperactive fish (unless it is feeding time) indicates water that is too hot. Never place your Betta on a window sill.



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Acclimating the Betta Fish

Your betta fish will likely come from a different water environment than what you have waiting for it, so it's very important to ease him/her through the transition without shocking him/her. Follow these steps closely to avoid harming your fish on his/her first day home:

- 1) Keep the fish away from direct sunlight and cold air vents on the way home. Bring him/her home immediately; do not leave him/her in the car for longer than necessary.
- 2) Float the bag/cup that your betta fish came home in inside the aquarium or fish bowl filled with room temperature water. This will make the temperature change more gradual. Let it float for 15 minutes.
- 3) Release your fully adjusted betta fish into his new home.

Feeding Your Betta Fish

Adult betta fish should be fed once a day. It is extremely important not to over-feed the fish; 1-3 pellets daily. Keep an eye on them as they eat and remove any food that is uneaten when they are done. Generally, a betta fish should take about two to five minutes to fill up, so avoid feeding them more than they can eat in that time.

Tips on food & feeding:

The betta fish, as most fish, can go a couple days without eating, so don't worry about leaving for the weekend. But if you leave for a longer period of time, be sure to have someone feed the fish.

It is good practice to skip a day of feeding once a week, as it gives the betta fish's digestive system time to recover and clean itself out.

Cleaning Your Betta Fish's Tank

The most important aspects of keeping your betta fish healthy and happy is keeping its tank clean.

- 1) Draw enough tap water to refill the tank 24 hours in advance. Add water conditioner.
- 2) Remove your fish from his/her tank with a net and place him/her in a clean container filled with the old tank water.
- 3) Drain the tank. Wipe down the sides of the tank, removing any buildup.
- 4) Rinse gravel thoroughly and replace.
- 5) Rinse the tank thoroughly and do not use any chemicals during the cleaning process.
- 6) Refill the tank with the water you have set aside and gently reintroduce the betta fish using the acclimating procedure.

Other Tips for Betta Fish Care

- ✓ Males should always be kept away from other betta fish, especially other males. They are highly territorial and will fight to the death.
- ✓ If introducing a betta fish to a community of fish, avoid inhabiting them with fin nippers or other fish that might irritate or feed on the slow-moving betta fish.
- ✓ Occasionally place a mirror in front of a male beta fish for some entertaining exercise. However, do not leave the mirror in place for long, as it will exhaust and stress him/her out!
- ✓ Taking good care of your betta fish means he could live from 2-4 years! Enjoy your feisty friend and keep him in good health.
- ✓ Some Betas get along well in freshwater community aquariums with other fish, some do not. It all depends on the personality of your fish.

