



**HUNTER PETS**  
14 Waterloo Ave, Thornton NSW 2322  
**Phone:** 02 4966 5988  
**Email:** [pets@hunterpets.com.au](mailto:pets@hunterpets.com.au)

## **GOLDFISH CARE SHEET**

Goldfish are beautiful, easily kept fish, but you must remember that they are totally dependent on you for their welfare in an aquarium or goldfish bowl.

**GOLDFISH VARIETIES:** Although goldfish are generally recognised as beginner's fish as they are quite hardy and live in "cold water" as opposed to "tropical fish", there are dozens of different types of goldfish that are available to you as you become more familiar with their requirements and competent in their care. Your HUNTER PETS pet shop or aquarium will have quite a variety in stock and information on numerous others. There are basically two forms - those with a normal flat vertical tail and "fan tails" (as viewed from above). Those with fanned tails generally have a more spherical shaped body than those with normal tails. The huge range of goldfish types are all variations in the colours and forms of these two main characteristics.

**AQUARIUM OR FISH BOWL?** In simple terms - the larger the volume of water the more stable it is and easier it is to maintain. A goldfish "bowl" has a relatively small surface area for oxygen to pass into the water; therefore it's only suitable for one or two goldfish. A large tank on the other hand is far more suitable for a number of goldfish because it has a larger surface area and greater volume of water. If a suitable filter is added, it greatly increases the water quality on any tank and therefore reduces the work involved in keeping the fish's environment healthy. Algae controls are available from your HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop.

**TRANSPORTING GOLDFISH HOME:** The transport of the goldfish from shop to home is quite easy so long as you take notice and follow the expert advice given to you by the HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop. Your fish will be placed with suitable water into a plastic bag that has been pressurised with air or most likely oxygen.

It is critical that you take your new goldfish home directly without delay, avoiding heat and stress .



**HUNTER PETS**

14 Waterloo Ave, Thornton NSW 2322

**Phone:** 02 4966 5988

**Email:** [pets@hunterpets.com.au](mailto:pets@hunterpets.com.au)

**PLACEMENT OF AQUARIUM:** If maintaining the right water conditions for the fish is to be made easy, the correct siting of the tank or fish bowl in your home is very important. Avoid close proximity to windows, heaters, air conditioners and doorways as these places are most likely to have fluctuating temperatures that will seriously stress the fish. Although goldfish are tolerant of quite high and low water temperatures when compared to other types of fish, they do need a fairly constant temperature. Too much light entering the tank/bowl will greatly accelerate the growth of algae on rocks, plants and ornaments and discolour the water making it go green.

**WATER CONDITIONS:** The chemistry of the water in your aquarium is critical to the health of your fish. Not only is it the environment they live in, but it is also what they breathe so you must make sure the water is as close to perfect as you can get it. Goldfish are quite tolerant of pH range when compared to other aquarium fish but you should aim for a neutral Ph value of 7 or slightly higher. A pH testing kit is as important for keeping your fish as a cage is for keeping a bird. If you did not purchase one with the fish, you need to get one immediately. Most pH kits are very affordable and are made for multiple tests; they are safe to handle even for older children to use (under supervision). Fortunately most of the other chemical conditions found in tap water are okay so there is very little water chemistry for you to worry about.

There is one downside to using tap water in you aquarium and that is the chemical(s) the authorities put in our tap water to destroy various harmful bacteria - this will also seriously harm your fish and so it must be neutralised with an aquarium water conditioner or "water-ager". If tap water is allowed to stand and age, most of the harmful chemicals including chlorine will "gas-off" hence the name "water ager". Talk to your HUNTER PETS aquarium or pet shop staff about water conditioners, they are experienced with these products and can recommend one or two that will suit your needs. Get the water right and you are going to have very few problems - do not underestimate how important this is to the health of your fish.

**IMPORTANT:** Whenever adding any chemicals or medications to aquariums, ensure the directions on the label are strictly adhered to. Know exactly how much water your aquarium or goldfish bowl holds and take care with the dosage calculations or an overdose may occur and the results could be fatal.



## HUNTER PETS

14 Waterloo Ave, Thornton NSW 2322

Phone: 02 4966 5988

Email: [pets@hunterpets.com.au](mailto:pets@hunterpets.com.au)

**TANK MAINTENANCE:** Regular water changes are required to remove dissolved fish waste and detritus. This waste is heavier than water so at least once per month you should siphon off 25% of the water from the bottom rather than scoop it from the surface. If you have a filtration system, turn it off well before water change to allow waste to settle, replace the filter medium as required and turn the filter back on after the water change is completed and the water level is back to normal. Talk to your HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop about a "gravel cleaner" - every aquarist should have one; they're great for this job making it easy and fun. Shop staff will do a demo for you as they probably use one in the shop themselves almost every day. Don't forget to test the pH and adjust it accordingly after the water change.

**TANK LAYOUT & DESIGN:** This is infinitely variable and very much down to personal taste. A free-swimming area in the middle of the tank is needed by the fish, the rest is up to you. Don't forget that if you are using live plants, just like garden plants they need trimming-up and occasionally replacing. The rocks and ornaments need to be periodically removed and cleaned - don't use chemicals!

**FEEDING:** Remember that numerous fish die from over-feeding and very few starve to death! You should feed your goldfish a small amount of food that is all eaten in two minutes or so a few times per day. If food remains uneaten it will decay and pollute the water and the final result of this situation is called a disaster. Many new aquarists learn this lesson the hard way and kill perfectly healthy fish that is why your HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop is glad you are reading this care sheet. Cloudy water is more often than not the result of over-feeding by well meaning but inexperienced new aquarists. Green water is often the result of decaying uneaten food coupled with too much light entering the tank. When you go away on holidays your fish can survive for quite some time without food. It is far better to let them go without food for a few days than it is to put extra food in the day you go away. Talk to your HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop about holiday block(s) and whether or not you need them.

**HEALTH:** This HUNTER PETS basic care sheet cannot give you detailed information on fish diseases and health issues. If your goldfish become sick, you need expert advice and you need it immediately you discover that there is a problem. Goldfish are usually trouble-free and hardy, they should appear bright-eyed and have a shiny appearance except in the case of fish like black moors that tend to have a natural "matt finish". If a goldfish is sick it will become stressed, its movement will be sluggish its dorsal fin (on top of the back) will be prone and its other fins will be drooped. Before you seek the expert advice and commence



**HUNTER PETS**  
14 Waterloo Ave, Thornton NSW 2322  
**Phone:** 02 4966 5988  
**Email:** [pets@hunterpets.com.au](mailto:pets@hunterpets.com.au)

any treatment, this stressed look can be induced by the following physical, environmental factors:

1. Lack of regular water changes.
2. Extremes of pH value either side of 7.
3. Water hardness - take a sample to your HUNTER PETS aquarist in the pet shop or aquarium.
4. Incorrect feeding - only you know if you over or under-feed.
5. Water contamination - household cleaning agents, fly spray, contaminated hands in the tank, etc.
6. Recent temperature fluctuations.
7. Over-crowding.

Goldfish diseases fall into four main groups:

- Fungus - Secondary infection caused by that fact that the fish is stressed.
- White Spot - A microscopic parasitic disease causing tiny white spots to appear on the fish.
- Bacterial - These diseases cause the fins to appear as though they are rotting away.
- Parasitic - These conditions often cause the fish to scratch itself on the sand and the fins

to appear to fray.

All of the problems above need some expert advice to clearly identify the problem. All of them can be cured with the correct medication and the advice and medications are available at your HUNTER PETS aquarium/pet shop.

Fish keeping is great fun and hopefully you will not encounter the problems outlined above and the more you understand about your Goldfish's basic needs, the more chance you have of great success.