

Popular Freshwater Fish for Beginners

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Maintaining an aquarium is a relaxing and easy hobby. While the selection of fish available online and at your local pet store can be overwhelming, this guide profiles a few of the most popular and hardy freshwater fish that are perfect for beginners and seasoned aquarists alike.

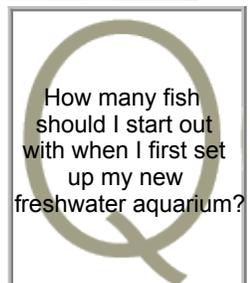
With patience and good care, these fish will thrive in your aquarium, and provide you and your family with much enjoyment. For more information visit LiveAquaria.com, a great resource for stocking your new freshwater aquarium.



Danios are small, active, boisterous fish that are well suited for the community aquarium. Many species of Danios are brightly colored with horizontal stripes along the body. These hardy fish are tolerant of a wide range of water conditions, and are often used as starter fish to help build up the necessary bacteria to cycle a new aquarium. They should be kept in small schools. They will accept a wide variety of foods, though flake food is appropriate.

QUICK STATS

Minimum Tank Size:	10 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful
Approximate Size:	3"
Color Form:	Blue, Purple, White, Yellow
Diet:	Omnivore



How many fish should I start out with when I first set up my new freshwater aquarium?

A. Start with two or three hardy fish the first ten days, then get two or three more, wait another ten days, etc. If you put too many fish into a new aquarium at once, the water will not be able to adequately cycle, and will quickly turn toxic. Patience is the key for the first six to eight weeks.



2. TETRAS

Tetras are small, brightly colored, and timid fish that will live well with other community fish. It is ideal to keep six or more fish of the same species of Tetra in the aquarium. Many different schools of Tetras can be maintained in the aquarium, providing a unique display of color. Tetras do best in a well-planted aquarium, and will accept most flake foods.

QUICK STATS	
Minimum Tank Size:	10 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful
Approximate Size:	1-1/2"
Color Form:	Assorted colors
Diet:	Omnivore



3. GUPPIES

Guppies are a very hardy, peaceful fish that are also very prolific breeders. The male is easy to distinguish from the female because the male is usually more colorful and has a large tail and pointed anal fin. The female is usually larger, thicker bodied, with less color and a smaller tail. They are livebearers, which means that the babies are free swimming at birth. At each birth, the female can have anywhere between 4 and 60 babies. If left in a community aquarium, the guppy fry will be quickly eaten if not secured in a breeding net or breeder's box. If you're not interested in breeding them, keep all males or all females; mix the sexes and you will most likely have babies. Guppies will accept most flake foods.

QUICK STATS	
Minimum Tank Size:	20 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful
Approximate Size:	2-1/2"
Color Form:	Assorted colors
Diet:	Omnivore



4. BETTAS

Bettas are a favorite because of their beautiful long fins, and ease of care. The males sport deep beautiful colors; the females are less colorful. The Betta is called the Siamese Fighting Fish because of its behavior towards other males of the same species. Do not keep two or more males in the same aquarium. If more than one male betta fish is placed in the same aquarium, they will fight until only one of them remains. Bettas will accept most carnivore flake foods.

QUICK STATS	
Minimum Tank Size:	3 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful
Approximate Size:	3"
Color Form:	Assorted, Blue, Red
Diet:	Carnivore



5. PLECOSTOMUS

Plecos provide the valuable service of cleaning your aquarium and should be added after the aquarium has been established. They have specially adapted mouthparts, enabling them to attach to various surfaces. Most Plecos are peaceful and prefer to rest or slowly graze over the aquarium bottom. They do an excellent job of eating unwanted algae from the bottom and sides of the aquarium. As they get older they may eat algae less often and you will need to supplement their diet with algae wafers that sink to the bottom. Drop in the wafers after you turn off the

QUICK STATS	
Minimum Tank Size:	50 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful

lights for the day to discourage the other fish from getting the food before your Pleco can get to it.



Cory Cats are peaceful and entertaining scavengers that are essential in any community aquarium. They are bottom dwellers and are content constantly rummaging around looking for scraps, keeping the substrate clean. They are very energetic and remain relatively small and will thrive in a wide range of water conditions. Sinking food pellets should be used to supplement leftover food that sinks to the bottom of the aquarium.

Approximate Size:	6"-12"
Color Form:	Assorted colors
Diet:	Omnivore

QUICK STATS	
Minimum Tank Size:	30 gallons
Care Level:	Easy
Temperament:	Peaceful
Approximate Size:	2"
Color Form:	Black, White, Green
Diet:	Omnivore