

# Hardy Aquarium Corals for the Beginning Reef Aquarist

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Toadstool Mushroom Coral  
(*Sarcophyton* sp.)



Candy Cane Coral  
(*Caulstrea furcata*)

Stocking your new reef aquarium with coral can seem a daunting task to the first time hobbyist. But once you've got the [tools you need to succeed](#), caring for your coral isn't as hard as it seems.

While no coral is truly "easy" to care for, there are some species that are less aggressive and have proven themselves to be hardy in the home aquarium.

On our [LiveAquaria.com](#) website, corals that fit the "Easy" care level and "Peaceful" temperament parameters, such as *Sarcophyton* sp., *Caulastrea* sp., and *Lobophytum* sp., all make excellent corals for the [first time reef hobbyist](#). These coral types are considered relatively hardy and peaceful (won't compete aggressively for space). Like all coral, they still require good water parameters in addition to [iodine](#), [strontium](#), and other [trace element](#) supplementation.

✓ ***Sarcophyton* sp. corals** are often referred to as Mushroom, Leather, Toadstool, or Trough Corals. They benefit from additional food such as microplankton, baby brine shrimp, or foods designed for filter feeding invertebrates.

✓ The ***Candy Cane Coral (Caulstrea furcata)*** and ***Trumpet Coral (Caulastrea curvata)*** are large polyp stony (LPS) coral. Some species of *Caulastrea* can be sensitive to metal halide lighting, so take time in acclimating these corals to this type of lighting. They benefit from additional food fed weekly in the form of chopped meaty items, baby brine shrimp or zooplankton.

✓ The ***Devil's Hand Leather Coral (Lobophytum* sp.)** is also referred to as Finger Leather Coral, Cabbage Leather Coral, or Lobed Leather Coral. Symbiotic algae hosted within its body provide the majority of its nutritional needs from the light-driven process of photosynthesis, but it benefits from



additional food such as microplankton, baby brine shrimp, or foods designed for filter feeding invertebrates.

## Saltwater Fish and Invertebrates for the Beginner



Fish



Inverts