



Betta Care Sheet

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Betta fish care, backed by real research.

QUICK FACTS

LIFESPAN
3–5 years

MINIMUM TANK
5 gallons

TEMPERATURE
77–82°F

DIET
Carnivore

MALES
One per tank

THE TANK

- **5 gallons or larger.** Longer bettas taller: bettas breathe at the surface.
- **Secure lid, with an air gap.** Bettas jump, and they need surface air.
- **Adjustable heater,** checked against a separate thermometer.
- **Gentle filter.** A sponge filter is ideal; strong current stresses bettas.
- **Plants and hiding spots.** Live or silk, never sharp plastic.
- **No direct sunlight.** Sun can overheat a small tank fast.

THE WATER

AMMONIA

0

NITRITE

0

NITRATE

<50

PH

6.5–7.5

- **Cycle the tank before the fish moves in.** It takes 3–8 weeks for water quality to stabilize.
- **Condition all tap water.** Chlorine and chloramine are toxic to fish.
- **Change 20–30% of the water weekly.**
- **Rinse filter media in old tank water only.** Tap water kills the good bacteria.

FEEDING

- **Choose a quality betta pellet** with animal protein first on the label as your fish's main food source.
- **Feed once or twice a day,** only what gets eaten in a few minutes.
- **Remove leftovers.** Uneaten food rots and worsens the water quality.
- **One fasting day a week is fine.** Adults can safely go days without food.
- **Treats:** frozen or freeze-dried bloodworms, daphnia, brine shrimp.
- **Skip generic tropical flakes.** Too much plant filler for a carnivore.

RED FLAGS

- Not eating, lethargy, or hiding for days
- Clamped fins or faded color
- Constant gasping at the surface
- Rubbing or flashing against objects
- White spots (ich), gold dust (velvet), ragged fins (fin rot)
- Pinecone-like raised scales: serious, act immediately

See a red flag? Test your water first. Most problems start there.

NEVER: keep two males together · use soap on anything that touches the tank · add a fish to an uncycled tank · trust a bowl or an unheated tank

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