

How to Look After Your Fish*

So you decided to get an aquatic pet? It seemed like a good idea at the time. But can you take the pressure, the responsibility? You bought the best bowl in the shop. The salesman tried desperately to sell you a tank, but you felt that for one goldfish that was, perhaps, a little over the top. You bought pondweed, "the best money can buy," or so the salesman told you. In the cold light of day you have to confess that it looks remarkably like normal weed. Still, underwater who'll notice the difference? Weeds are all the same - to a fish.

You bought a goldfish which, you were less than subtly informed by the salesman, is far more suitable for ponds. He also failed to remind you that *Carassius Auratus* can live for anything between ten and thirty years. So don't go planning a holiday in the meantime.

You had better get your act together and learn all about looking after the little chap or little chapess; they are terribly difficult to sex you know.

- Don't over-fill the bowl. You reduce the surface area of the water, thereby reducing its oxygen content.
- Don't over-feed your fish and bear in mind certain foods pall with overuse. You don't enjoy the same food, day in, day out, do you?
- Water is possibly the most important constituent in keeping your fish happy. Change it regularly. Remember, a clean fish is a happy fish.
- There are many plants that are suitable for your goldfish bowl. All of them, coincidentally, are wet, while pondweed is the most boring.
- Reproduction. A lot of this goes on. So keep your fish rigourously segregated!
- Cats are not fish. Please keep these two creatures as separate as possible.

So, there you go. Follow these simple tips and you can't go wrong. Thirty years of pure bliss will be yours. And remember, a goldfish in the bowl is worth two on the floor!

* Warning: Some fish are really Inter-Dimensional Espionage Operatives in disguise. Treat them with the utmost respect, they may have many worlds to save. And one of them might be yours.