

## How to keep guppies copyright: [www.guppyfarmuk.com](http://www.guppyfarmuk.com)

Guppies are very easy to keep and breed, after all they are called the 'millions fish'.

Guppies are very difficult to keep and breed well.

Everyone looks after their guppies differently to everyone else but in general the following would be a good regime to follow:

The tank size all depends upon the amount of guppies that you have in the tanks and also the quality and effectiveness of the filtration. However the larger the tank the easier it is to maintain the water quality. Smaller tanks may be appropriate for some people, but then a regular regime of water changing is necessary.

The water conditions can vary considerably because the guppy can tolerate most conditions. However the ideal conditions would be with a Ph of 7 and a temperature of 72 to 78. More extreme temperatures will be tolerated but can have affect on the growth of the stock. Lower temperatures have affect on colour and growth; higher temperatures considerably help, but may result in lower life expectancy. Lower night temperatures gives strength and well being to guppies, as with all fish, and so I have a timer on the heating and it is turned off at night.

The best lighting is daylight. This has a positive effect, especially on colour. A full spectrum light bulb should be used as an alternative. 12 hours of light is sufficient and should be co-ordinated with the temperature to simulate the day night cycle.

20% of the water is changed twice per week. Each tank has a Hamburger filter, no gravel (which helps with keeping the tanks clean) and at least one plant.

For breeding I usually use 1 male with two females or a set of 2 males with three females. The tank would be about 30cm x 30cm x 450cm (approx. 40 ltr). There are many different ways of harvesting the fry :

net traps

dense plants

dense scourer fibre

vertical V traps

horizontal V traps

and of course some guppy strains do not eat their fry !

I would normally separate the fry from their parents as soon as possible and leave them in a smaller container. This helps with 'food envy' which is necessary to promote good and fast growth for at least the first month. There can be up to 150 fry, but if I have a very small brood I would start them off in a tray that I keep as part of a set of drawers. The brood is then put into a larger 100ltr tank as the guppies increase in size.

In effect all stock are kept separate and therefore in permanent quarantine. All tanks are independent of each other thus greatly reducing any potential risk of infection or disease spreading. Should the tank occupants appear less happy than usual then it may be an indication of infection or disease. I would recommend that 90% of the water be changed with aged water and salt added at the rate of about a table spoon per gallon. If the symptoms persist then seek the help of a vet or advise from a competent aquarium shop manager who can advise which one of the many aquatic medicines would be best.

In order to successfully keep and breed guppies the feeding regime requires special attention. The best food is always live food but best growth and colour result from a large variation in food whether live or not. Live food such as wingless fruit fly, grindal worms, white worms, Walter worms, daphnia, mosquito larvae and tubifex are eagerly received. These are all also very acceptable as frozen food. Then there are all types of dried general artificial food and other more specialist flake such as spirulina. Good quality food makes a stronger guppy that will be more resistant to infection or disease. The Guppy is an omnivore and will willingly accept any food offered.

For the new-born juveniles newly hatched brine shrimp are a must, but I supplement this with micro worm and also powdered shellless brine shrimp (I mix this with water and pour small amounts into the fry tanks). It is important to feed little and often. Continuous feeding with a large variation gives great

results with the progressive development of the young guppies.

No matter how good your husbandry is you will only have as good a fish as the genetics that it has been bred from. It is therefore key to have good quality stock to work and breed from to get and improve the strain. This means careful selection of the breeding stock and even then it may be that the male and female are simply not compatible and produce fish of a poor quality.

It is important to remember that no matter how good the stock, the offspring are not clones of their parents and it is only the top 10% or 5% that are good enough to be of show quality standard.