

# mandarin goby

## care sheet



Extremely popular due to their unusual beauty, these small fish should only be kept in well-established 30-gallon or larger aquariums with plenty of live rock, live sand and hiding places. They feed on natural prey and tiny crustaceans found in live rock and sand. The two most common mandarins are the green and the spotted, or psychedelic, mandarin gobies, also known as Dragonets.

### facts

scientific name:	synchiropus sp
average adult size:	up to 4 inches, depending on species
average life span:	depends on species
diet:	carnivore
minimum aquarium size:	29+ gallons, depending on species
water temperature	72 to 78°F
specific gravity:	1.023 to 1.025



**Note:** The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, refer to the Sources section or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.

Developed with and approved by a qualified veterinarian.

### diet

A well-balanced mandarin goby diet consists of:

- Small crustaceans known as copepods. Some can be converted to eating pellets and frozen brine shrimp or mysis shrimp.
- Must be kept in a tank with live rock where it will feed on copepods and other tiny life forms.

### feeding

Things to remember when feeding your mandarin goby:

- Feed small amounts 2 to 3 times daily, no more than fish will eat in 1 to 2 minutes.
- Keep in tank with plenty of live rock.
- Thaw frozen food before feeding.

### housing

- Keep in an appropriately sized aquarium; provide live rock and décor for hiding places.
- **Stable water quality and parameters are critical to the health of aquatic life. If you are unsure of your water quality, Petco provides free water testing.**

### normal behavior

- Spend most of their time actively hopping about the live rock in search of food.
- Very shy, appreciate lots of hiding places.
- May produce noxious mucus to deter predators.
- Males have elongated first dorsal spine and may show brighter colors.

### habitat maintenance

- **Daily:** Check filter, water temperature, specific gravity and other equipment.
- **Weekly:** Check water quality at least once a week.
- **Monthly:** Change 10 to 25% of the total volume of water every 2 to 4 weeks, or as needed.

Introduce new inhabitants to the aquarium gradually.

### compatibility

- Best kept in reef-type tanks.
- Can't compete with larger fish for food.
- Very territorial toward own species; keep only one fish or one male/female pair per tank.

### signs of a healthy fish

- Clear eyes
- Eats vigorously
- Hides most of the time
- Fins completely intact and undamaged
- **Avoid overcrowded conditions, which are a major cause of stress and disease. Maintain good water quality with regular water changes and adequate filtration.**

### red flags

- Loss of color or appetite
- Spots or fungus on body or mouth
- Listlessness
- Erratic swimming
- Labored respiration
- Weight loss
- Cloudy eyes
- Frayed fins

### common health issues

Health Issue	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Fin rot	Frayed or disintegrating fins; the base of the fins usually reddens.	Improve water quality; consult your aquatic veterinarian for treatment.
Marine ich	Cysts on fins, gills and skin; labored respiration, excess skin mucus or pale skin.	Treat entire aquarium with a commercial parasite remedy and improve water quality; freshwater dips can dislodge the parasites.

*If you notice any of these signs, test water quality and improve as necessary.*

## shopping list for needed supplies

- Appropriately sized aquarium
- Appropriate food, dry and frozen
- Décor
- Marine aquarium salt
- Water conditioner
- Filter
- Water test kit
- Full spectrum lighting
- Net
- Thermometer
- Protein skimmer (recommended)
- Marine substrate
- Heater
- Hydrometer
- Book about mandarin gobies

## sources

Ask a store partner about Petco's selection of books on mandarin gobies and the variety of private brand products available for the care and happiness of your new pet. All private brand products carry a 100% money-back guarantee.

Because all aquatic life are potential carriers of infectious diseases, such as *Atypical Mycobacterium* and *Salmonella*, always wash your hands before and after handling your aquatic life or habitat contents to help prevent the potential spread of disease.

Pregnant women, children under the age of 5, senior citizens and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing or caring for aquatic life and should consider not having aquatic life as a pet.

Go to [cdc.gov/healthypets](http://cdc.gov/healthypets) and [petco.com/caresheet](http://petco.com/caresheet) for more information about aquatic life and disease.

This Care Sheet can cover the needs of other species. Go to [petco.com](http://petco.com) for more information.

