

A HOME FOR YOUR BETTA



2 Litre container example.

TANK SIZE

When deciding how big a tank to use remember that Bettas are active explorers and need room to swim freely. They are also inquisitive and enjoy having a home they can explore.



4.5 Litre Tank with light & filter example

We suggest a tank / container of as large as possible for your Betta's permanent home.

CLIMATE

Remember - Bettas are tropical fish - cold and/or fluctuating temperatures can make bettas sick or even kill them. Bettas may be fine in jars in the warm shop where you bought them, but the average lounge room is not always the same temperature.



A 10 litre Betta Kingdom tank is perfect for a healthy and happy Betta and can be planted up as a nano tank quit easily.

If a Betta's tank is heated, it will help keep the tank at about the same temperature (around 26C) and give him the best chance of staying healthy. Chances are if you feel cold so will your fish.

If you decide to use a heater, the tank must be large enough for the smallest available **submersible heater** - i.e.: a tank at least 10cm deep or more. It is easier to decorate a larger tank too.



PLANTS



Bettas like to have **live plants** in their tanks to rest on and hide in. Popular choices are java fern, java moss and anubias.

Sickly live plants are not good for water quality.

Unless you can keep aquatic plants healthy, you are better off using silk plants.



Don't use hard plastic plants as they are known to tear Bettas' fins.



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Keeping Male Betta Splendens

(Siamese Fighting Fish)



Betta Splendens is one of the most popular and colourful tropical fish kept in homes today. Each fish can develop its own personality and be very entertaining.

It is not true that Bettas live in buffalo footprints in the wild, or that they only require tiny bodies of water to thrive.

In the wild, Bettas (pronounced *bet-tahs*) live in large bodies of still water where they eat a high protein diet of insects. In their native habitats there is not a lot of dissolved oxygen in these waterways. Bettas have a "labyrinth organ" which allows them to breathe atmospheric air, rather than being solely reliant on dissolved oxygen like most other fish. This is why your Betta takes mouthfuls of air at the surface of his tank - if air supply is blocked he may suffocate.

Bettas are incredibly territorial - hence their common name "Siamese fighting fish". Please note that fighting Bettas in Australia is illegal.

TYPES OF BETTAS

There are many types of Betta Splendens available in Australia today. A few choices you might find include:

VEILTAIL



The most common Betta is the Veiltail Betta Splendens. The male fish has a long drooping tail as well as long fins top and bottom

CROWNTAIL



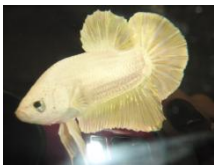
The Crowntail Betta has long fins that have the webbing between the rays reduced in length. This gives an illusion that the double rays extend beyond the fin edges. Where only single rays extend, (not a desirable trait) these are Combtails however some aquariums still sell them as Crowntails.

HALF MOON



Half Moons are the ultimate in finnage and have huge tail fins where the fin is a perfect letter D shape. These are often quite expensive but extremely showy.

PLAKAT



The Plakat or short finned Betta is also becoming very popular and more are being seen for sale. The males can sometimes be confused for a female but generally have longer pectoral fins and flare more readily than the females.

CLEAN WATER FOR YOUR BETTA

AMMONIA

Like all fish, Bettas' waste contains ammonia. Ammonia is poisonous, and it burns fish (Do you know how bad cleaning ammonia smells?). If ammonia builds up in a Betta's tank, it will cause burns and gill damage, and disease may follow.

MAKING WATER SAFE FOR YOUR FISH

Tap water contains chlorine and chloramines which can burn your Betta's gills. A water ager should be used to remove the majority of the chlorine before putting it into the Betta's tank. Tank water and dechlorinated tap water should be **aged for at least 24 hours** (eg. in a bucket or tub) before it is added to the Betta's tank.

CHANGING THE WATER

Please do regular water changes to ensure that ammonia does not build up in your Betta's tank. How much water you need to change depends on how big the tank is – Eg. 100% of the water in any unfiltered tank of less than 3 litres should be changed at least two times a week, or the Betta will be burned and poisoned by ammonia.

If you decide to use a **filter**, you won't need to change the water as often. We suggest that you use a simple air-driven sponge filter or under gravel filter, as many power filters suck Bettas onto the inlet

In a 10 litre tank with plants and a small sponge filter you may only need to change 30% of the water once per week.

MORE INFORMATION ON BETTAS

Betta Australis is the Australian Betta club (bettaaustralis.com) and the International Betta Congress (ibcbettas.org) is the International Betta club. Or drop into see **Absolutely Fish and Pets**. We have staff with current membership of both Betta Australis and the International Betta Congress. Whether you want a pet Betta, help with choosing a Betta or help with breeding Bettas and caring for them the team at Absolutely Fish and Pets can give you the best advice.

FEEDING YOUR BETTA

You can feed a Betta any **quality pellet food** that is small enough for him to eat. A varied diet is good for a Betta so try and add some **frozen bloodworm, brine shrimp or black / white mosquito larva** to his diet as a treat.

A Betta's stomach is only as big as his eye. Feed only very small portions and never feed more than he can eat in 30 seconds.

You can buy an **ammonia test kit** which will help you see when ammonia is present, so you know a water change must be done.

WHAT CAN YOU ADD TO THE WATER

Leaves from the Indian almond tree (*Terminalia catappa*), also known as Ketapang, have been observed to have a beneficial effect on Bettas. The leaves release substances which seem to provide a protective barrier for Bettas against illness. We therefore suggest that you add **Ketapang/Indian almond leaves or Betta Spa** (or alternatively, black water extract) to your Betta's water.