



Koi Care Guide

CONGRATULATIONS for choosing to keep Koi!

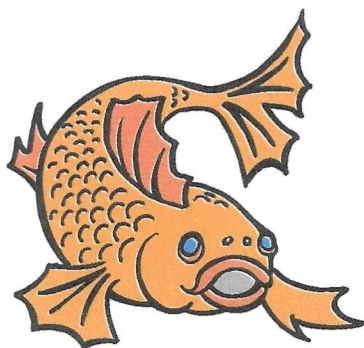
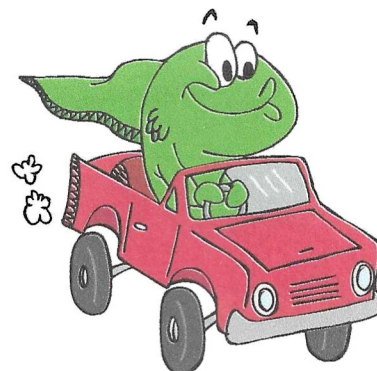
Koi are great pets that can provide many years of enjoyment!

Koi can live in home ponds for over 50 years!

Here are some facts on Koi, and suggestions on how to care for them!

Bringing Your New Koi Home

- Quarantine EVERY new Koi for at least a month!
- Float the bag of Koi in your quarantine tank or pond *in the shade* for at least an hour, or until the water temperature inside the bag is within 2 degrees of the new water temperature.
- Open the bag and fold it down, then reach in with your bare hands and LIFT the Koi over the edge of the bag into the new water. DO NOT pour the Koi and foul water into your pond or tank! Remove the bag and dispose of the foul water. DO NOT add water to the bag to equalize temperature or pH. Koi can easily adjust to one big change in pH – but the bag must be floated to equalize temperature which can shock and kill the Koi!
- Do NOT feed your Koi for 3 days. Their internal organs need time to adjust to all the changes. Feed lightly for at least a week – your food may be completely new to the Koi and it may take them a while to adjust.
- Feed any premium hi-protein Koi food. Do not amend ANY complete Koi food more than 10% with vegetables, fruits or treats.
- Koi are cold blooded and their metabolism is dependent on water temperature. Do not feed below 50 degrees. Feed lightly (you may use the same high-protein feed – just use a LOT less!) between 50 and 60 degrees. Feed heavily with a high-protein feed in water temperatures over 70 degrees. Koi are grazers – many small feedings are preferable to one large one because it mimics nature.



Koi HATE Change!

- Koi can adapt to nearly any pH, water hardness or water temperature – but changes in water parameters stress the Koi, which can cause them to succumb to parasites or disease.
- Larger volumes of water have more stable water parameters. Colder climates should have deeper ponds. Every pond should be at least 2 feet deeper than the frost level for that area! Shade ponds to keep temperatures more constant. DO small water changes daily, or larger ones at least weekly, but do not let the pond water temperature change more than 2 degrees at a time.

Koi are playful!

- When you fall into a goldfish pond, the goldfish swim away – but when you fall into a Koi pond – the Koi are curious and will swim right over to you to see what's new in their home! Most can be trained to hand feed, and many like to be petted!

Ponds

- Keep your pond CLEAN!
 - No leaves, debris or plant matter should accumulate on the bottom!
 - Bottom Drains will remove Koi waste and other detritus to the filter.
- Do not use ANY pesticides near the pond, or in any place where water could wash pesticides into the pond. A raised pond edge is very helpful!
- Never use 1 large pump when you can use 2 smaller pumps instead! If one pump quits, the other will keep the Koi alive! Same for air pumps! They are cheap insurance.
- Backup power is more critical for running aeration than for pumping!





Water

- Always add a de-chlorinator BEFORE you add city water to your pond. Use it for EVERY water change if you have city water.
- pH should be between 6.8 and 9. Hard water is not a problem.
- NEVER lower pH!
- If you need to raise pH, add Baking Soda and retest. Add a Tablespoon of baking soda per hundred gallons per day to keep total alkalinity (t.a.) constant. 1 Tablespoon baking soda in 100 gallons raises t.a. by about 20-25 ppm, and will also raise pH – but never higher than 8.4 – which is fine!



Koi Growth

- Many Koi have the genetics to be able to grow over 30"!
- Koi growth is controlled by pheromones in the water, so water changes that remove pheromones allow the Koi to grow to their potential
- Koi grow up to ~12 years of age, albeit more slowly after the first 6 years!



Filtration

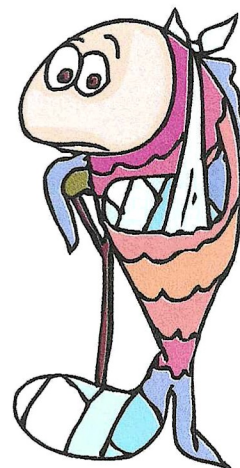
- Filters should run 24 hours a day!
- There should be 3 stages of filtration:
 - First – remove solids like poop and leaves.
 - Second – remove fine particles that can cloud the water.
 - Third – perform 'biologic' filtration.

A filter is a place for beneficial bacteria to colonize. One colony of beneficial bacteria converts ammonia (80% from respiration (breathing!) and 20% from poop) to Nitrite. A second colony converts Nitrite to Nitrate. Nitrate is plant fertilizer, and will be consumed by plants or should be removed by Frequent Partial Water Changes.

- Beneficial bacteria are IN the water – none need be added! The naturally occurring beneficial bacterial will colonize a filter in about 8 weeks.
- Filters need to be cleaned! How often depends on how many Koi and how much they are eating. Clean at least once a week in the summer, spring and fall, and once a month in winter.

Secrets to a Healthy Pond

- **#1*** Do Frequent Partial Water Changes!**
 - Rule of Thumb – change 10% PER DAY! That way – water parameters (temp, pH, etc.) do not change too fast and stress Koi!
- **Provide LOTS of Oxygen!**
 - Air Pumps with Air Stones are best! Do not depend on just a waterfall.
 - Ponds need air day and night – especially if there are plants in the pond.
 - Large Koi require more oxygen than small Koi.
- **Do NOT Overcrowd!**
 - A 'natural' pond has about 1 fish per *One Million* gallons!
 - The amount of filtration you have determines how many Koi can stay healthy in your pond! More filtration = more Koi!
- **The best way to treat problems is PREVENTION!**
 - **Every Water Change:**
 - Use de-chlorinator BEFORE water is added. Use an inexpensive auto-shut-off on your hose to avoid killing the Koi by forgetting to turn off the hose! Check that the air pump is running!
 - **Weekly:**
 - Keep the pond clean to avoid parasites and to prevent bacterial buildup.
 - TEST your pond water (and keep a chart) for Temperature, pH, Total Alkalinity, Ammonia and Nitrite.
 - **Monthly:**
 - TEST pond water for Nitrates. If above 50 ppm, do more Frequent Partial Water Changes!
 - **Twice a Year:**
 - Completely muck and clean the pond of all debris (spring and fall).
 - **Always:**
 - Quarantine new Koi at 75 degrees for a month. Add an existing Koi to the quarantine tank for the last week, and observe to see all Koi stay healthy.
 - Observe Koi behavior – look for any redness, Koi on the bottom with their fins clamped, Koi in isolation – not swimming with the group, Koi appearing to turn and rub their sides on the bottom (flashing), rapid breathing, or erratic swimming – these may be signs of a disease or poison.
 - Always try and maintain the Koi's Slime Coat, which is their first and BEST defense against parasites and disease.



If you need HELP!

Go to our web site: <https://koiorganisationinternational.org>
You will find a list of K.O.I. Certified Koi Keepers as well as all the information you need to be successful with Koi! Consider taking some courses to learn more about your wet pets – 100% satisfaction guaranteed!