How to care for...

**Checklist...**

**Equipment:**
- □ Aquarium
- □ Gravel cleaner
- □ Water testing kit
- □ Marine salt
- □ Marine substrate and live rock
- □ Reverse osmosis, deionised water or tap water conditioner
- □ Heater, thermometer and hydrometer
- □ Filter and protein skimmer

**Before purchase ensure that:**
- □ The aquarium is well established and large enough.
- □ Water parameters are as advised.

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**IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

**ALWAYS PURCHASE** test kits and regularly check the water for ammonia, nitrite, nitrate and pH. This will allow you to ensure that the water in your aquarium is not causing welfare problems for your fish.

**ESTABLISH A ROUTINE** for testing the water in your aquarium. Record your results to enable you to highlight fluctuations quickly. Also check the temperature of the water.

**MAINTAIN** the water in the aquarium within the accepted parameters highlighted in this leaflet. You may need to undertake regular water changes to achieve this.

**ALWAYS** wash your hands, making sure to rinse off all soap residues, before putting them into your aquarium. Wash them again afterwards and certainly before eating, drinking or smoking.

**NEVER** siphon by mouth. A fish tank can harbour bacteria which can be harmful if swallowed. Purchase a specially designed aquarium gravel cleaner which can be started without the need to place the siphon in your mouth.

**NEVER RELEASE YOUR AQUARIUM ANIMALS OR PLANTS INTO THE WILD.**

Never release an animal or plant bought for a home aquarium into the wild. It is illegal and for most fish species this will lead to an untimely and possibly lingering death as they are not native to this country. Any animals or plants that do survive might be harmful to the environment.

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**Seahorses & Pipefish**

**TROPICAL MARINE FISH**

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**ORNAMENTAL AQUATIC TRADE ASSOCIATION LTD**

“The voice of the ornamental fish industry”

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Introduction...
Both seahorses and pipefish are associated with coral reefs, sea grass beds and lagoons throughout the world’s oceans. They both belong to the family Syngnathidae.

They can be found in temperate, sub-tropical and tropical regions, however the most common species found in the aquarium trade are the tropical species.

Water requirements...
Seahorses and pipefish are delicate species which should not be added to a new tank. The water parameters are recommended to be as follows although these fish may acclimatise to different water over time:

Temperature: 23-28°C
pH: 8.1-8.4
Ammonia: 0 mg/l (0.01mg/l may be tolerated for short periods)
Nitrite: 0mg/l (0.125mg/l may be tolerated for short periods)
S.G.: 1.021-1.024 at 22-24°C

Biology...
There are over 50 species of seahorse and approximately 200 species of pipefish throughout the world’s oceans.

These fish are coated with armoured plates and skin rather than scales. The dorsal fin is used to propel the fish through the water and the other fins are often underdeveloped resulting in reduced swimming power.

Pipefish rarely exceed 20cm in length and the common Seahorse species available have a maximum length of 30cm.

The pipefish get their name due to their long, pipe-like snouts. Seahorses also share this characteristic, but their larger heads and stouter body gives them a horse-like appearance, and hence their name.

Seahorses also have finless tails that are prehensile. This allows them to cling on to vegetation which compensates for their weaker swimming ability. They are also capable of moving their eyes independently, much like a chameleon.

Many species of seahorses and pipefish form monogamous pairs. Famously, males of the species look after the eggs in brood pouches or canals that actively nourish the developing offspring.

Aqua...