

Fish Compatibility Chart

Here is a comprehensive Fish Compatibility Chart, designed as a visual guide for planning a harmonious community aquarium.

Online reading & updated: [compatible fish group for beginners](#).

How to Use This Chart

This chart groups common freshwater fish by their general temperament and needs. Fish within the same group are typically compatible. **Always research individual species for specific water parameter and dietary needs.**

Compatibility Group	Key Characteristics	Ideal Tank Size	Example Species	Caution / Incompatible With
1. Peaceful Community Fish	Docile, small to medium-sized, schooling or shoaling. Prefer heavily planted tanks.	20+ Gallons	Neon Tetra, Guppy, Platy, Corydoras Catfish, Harlequin Rasbora, Mollies, Zebra Danio, Cherry Barb, Hatchetfish, Otocinclus	Avoid: Large, aggressive, or fin-nipping fish.
2. Semi-Aggressive Community Fish	Can be territorial, especially during breeding. Need space and hiding spots.	30+ Gallons	Dwarf Gourami, Pearl Gourami, Angelfish, <i>some</i> Barbs (e.g., Tiger Barb), Rainbowfish, Bolivian Ram, Kribensis	Use Caution: Can bully peaceful fish. Avoid mixing with very timid species. Do not keep with fin-nippers.

3. Bottom Dwellers & Algae Eaters	Generally peaceful and occupy the bottom third of the tank. Essential clean-up crew.	10-20+ Gallons	Corydoras, Bristlenose Pleco, Otocinclus, Kuhli Loach, Yoyo Loach, Chinese Algae Eater (young)	Note: Some, like the Chinese Algae Eater, can become territorial and aggressive with age. Provide hiding spots.
4. Fin Nippers & Rowdy Schoolers	Active, fast-moving, and may nip at long, flowing fins. Do best in large schools (6+).	30+ Gallons	Tiger Barb, Serpae Tetra, Black Skirt Tetra, Red-Eyed Tetra	NEVER keep with: Slow-moving, long-finned fish like Betta, Angelfish, or Guppies. Their nipping will cause stress and injury.
5. Aggressive & Predatory Fish	Territorial, carnivorous, and will eat smaller tank mates. Often best in species-only tanks.	55+ Gallons	Oscar, Jack Dempsey, Flowerhorn, Red-Tailed Black Shark, Convict Cichlid, Arowana	Only for experienced keepers. Will view most community fish as food. Requires careful, selective tankmate choices.
6. Solitary & Special Cases	Not suitable for standard community tanks due to specific needs or temperament.	5-20+ Gallons	Betta (Siamese Fighting Fish): Males are highly aggressive to other males and similar-looking fish. Goldfish: Produce too much waste and require much cooler water than tropical fish. African Cichlids: Require very hard, high-pH water and are highly territorial.	Betta: Can sometimes live with very peaceful, small fish (e.g., Neon Tetras, Corydoras) in a large, well-planned tank. Goldfish & African Cichlids: Best kept in species-specific tanks.

Key Compatibility Factors

1. Temperament & Behavior

This is the most important factor.

- **Schooling Fish:** Must be kept in groups of 6 or more to feel secure. A lone schooling fish will be stressed.
- **Territorial Fish:** Need defined spaces, caves, and visual barriers to establish their territory without constant conflict.
- **Fin Nippers:** A major cause of stress and disease. Know which fish have this tendency.
- **Predatory Instinct:** "If it fits in its mouth, it's food." This is a golden rule in fishkeeping.

2. Water Parameters

Fish from different parts of the world have evolved in different water conditions.

- **pH:** Acidic (<7.0), Neutral (~7.0), or Alkaline/Basic (>7.0)
- **Hardness (GH & KH):** Soft water vs. Hard water.
- **Temperature:** Tropical fish generally need 75-80°F (24-27°C). Goldfish are coldwater fish.
- **Pro Tip:** Success is easier when you choose fish that all originate from similar environments (e.g., South American soft-water fish like Tetras and Angelfish, or Southeast Asian hard-water fish like Guppies and Mollys).

3. Tank Size & Swimming Zones

- **Tank Size:** Overstocking is a primary cause of aggression and poor water quality. Use the "one inch of fish per gallon" rule as a **very rough starting point**, but consider the fish's adult size and waste production.
- **Swimming Zones:** Create a balanced tank by stocking fish that prefer different levels.
 - **Top:** Hatchetfish, Guppies, Betta
 - **Mid-Water:** Tetras, Rasboras, Barbs, Rainbowfish
 - **Bottom:** Corydoras, Loaches, Plecos



Sample Community Tank Blueprints

Starter Community (20-Gallon Long)

- **Mid-Water:** 6x Neon Tetras
- **Mid-Water:** 6x Cherry Barbs
- **Bottom:** 4x Panda Corydoras
- **Clean-Up Crew:** 1x Bristlenose Pleco (will need a larger tank as an adult) or 3x Otocinclus
- **This works because:** All are peaceful, prefer similar water conditions, and occupy different zones.

Advanced Community (55-Gallon)

- **Centerpiece:** 1x Pair of Angelfish
- **Mid-Water School:** 12x Rummy-Nose Tetra
- **Active School:** 8x Zebra Danio
- **Bottom Dwellers:** 6x Kuhli Loaches & 1x Bristlenose Pleco
- **This works because:** The tank is large enough for the Angelfish's territory. The Tetras and Danios are fast enough to avoid any minor aggression and school beautifully.

Final Pro Tip: Always quarantine new fish for 2-4 weeks before introducing them to your main display tank to prevent the spread of disease. Happy fishkeeping