



Barbs at a Glance

Difficulty of care: **Beginner**

Average adult size: **1.5–14"** (varies by species)

Diet: **Omnivorous**

Minimum habitat size: **10 gallons (small species); 20+ gallons for mid-sized; 75+ gallons for large species**

Temperature: **76–80 F**



Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Choose a tank that is longer than it is tall to allow room for swimming and better oxygen exchange. Tank size depends on species. Smaller barbs can live in a 10-gallon tank, while tiger and rosy barbs need at least 20 gallons. Tinfoil barbs require 75 gallons or more as adults.
- Add 1–2 inches of fine gravel or sand. Use about 1.5 pounds of substrate per gallon of water. Provide plants and rocks for structure, placing décor along the edges to keep open swimming space.
- Use a filter that cycles the tank's water at least five times per hour. Keep water between 76–80 F and avoid temperature swings over 2 degrees in 24 hours.
- Replace 10–25% of the water every two to four weeks. Never fully drain the tank.

Supply Checklist

- Appropriately sized aquarium
- Freshwater substrate
- Filter and filter media
- Heater and thermometer
- Dechlorinator and beneficial bacteria starter
- Water test kit
- Aquarium light
- Décor and plants
- Tropical fish food
- Gravel vacuum
- Net



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Species Overview

Barbs are small, colorful freshwater fish that are great for beginner fish owners. There are hundreds of types, ranging widely in size and temperament. Most barbs are energetic, active swimmers and do best in groups.

Common types include:

- **Tiger barbs:** Up to 3 inches; active and semi-aggressive
- **Cherry barbs:** Up to 1.5 inches; peaceful and bright red (males)
- **Rosy barbs:** About 3 inches; active but usually not strong fin-nippers
- **Tinfoil barbs:** Over 12 inches; need large tanks

Fun fact ↪ Barbs are schooling fish and should be kept in groups of at least six.

Diet

Feed your barbs once or twice daily. Offer high-quality flakes, pellets, freeze-dried, or frozen foods. Barbs enjoy bloodworms and brine shrimp as treats.

Feed only what they can eat in 1-2 minutes. Fully thaw frozen food before feeding.

Health

Healthy barbs are active, with clear eyes and clean fins. Watch for lethargy, appetite loss, gasping, scratching, dull color, or lumps.

Test water regularly and ensure equipment is working properly.

Fun fact

↪ Some types are peaceful, while others may nip fins.

