



Starfish at a Glance

Difficulty of care: **Moderate to advanced**
(species dependent)

Average lifespan: **Up to 35 years**

Average adult size: **Varies by species**

Diet: **Carnivorous/scavenger**

Minimum habitat size: **10–55+ gallons**
(species dependent)

Temperature: **76–82 F**
(most tropical species)



Fun fact ↪ They can regrow lost arms and even form new individuals.

Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Starfish require a stable saltwater aquarium. Tank size depends on species, ranging from 10 gallons for small types to 55 gallons or more for larger ones.
- Add 1–2 inches of substrate and maintain proper salinity with a specific gravity of 1.023–1.025. Stability is critical, as starfish are very sensitive to environmental changes.
- Keep water temperature between 76–82 F for most tropical species. Use a reliable filtration system that cycles water efficiently and creates moderate currents. Include rocks, coral, and live rock to provide hiding spaces and natural enrichment.
- Test water regularly to maintain ammonia and nitrite at 0, nitrates below 15–20 ppm, and a pH around 8.2. Perform partial water changes of 10–25% every two to four weeks. Avoid fully draining the tank to prevent stress.



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Supply Checklist

- Saltwater aquarium
- Marine salt and substrate
- Filter system
- Heater and thermometer
- Water test kit
- Refractometer or hydrometer
- Live rock and decor
- Appropriate food

Fun fact ↪ They do not have a brain, heart, or blood.

Health

Healthy starfish have even coloration, intact arms, and active feeding behavior.

- **Warning signs:** Color changes or reduced appetite
- **Physical issues:** Sores or damaged arms
- **Environmental risks:** Poor water quality or instability

Stable tank conditions are essential for long-term health.

Fun fact ↪ They eat by extending their stomach outside their body.

Diet

Starfish eat a variety of meaty foods. They can be fed fresh, frozen, or pelleted options designed for marine animals. Many species are scavengers and will eat fish, mollusks, crustaceans, and other small organisms they find in the tank. Some species may also consume algae or corals.

Feed your starfish two to three times per week, ensuring that any frozen food is fully thawed before feeding. Providing a varied diet helps meet their nutritional needs.

Fun fact ↪ Starfish are not fish—they are marine invertebrates.

