

General care of commonly kept newts.

Newts are clever, charismatic and comical water sprites that can amaze and challenge your abilities as a keeper of amphibians.

Easy step by step set up. (For more information see [Newt care.](#))

1. Find a place out of direct sunlight and drafts to set up your new newt habitat.
2. Rinse/wipe down the entire tank (inside and out) and all decorations with 2 percent bleach solution (NO, soaps, detergents or other cleaning materials). Let stand over night.
3. Add 2-4 inches of dechlorinated water.
4. Add all other decorations (spognum moss, cork, wood and or rocks).
5. Install your filter and turn on.
6. Add a light if desired. Newts do not like bright light so keep the level low.
7. Allow your set up to sit overnight so that the water becomes room temperature, between 50-75°F.
8. Add your new pet newt.

Newt care.

About your newt.

These three species (Japanese Fire Bellied Newt (*C. pyrrhogaster*), California Newt (*T. torosa*) and the Red Bellied Newt (*T. rivularis*) are locked together by cooler temperatures and living predominately in the Northern hemisphere.

Newts belong to the order Caudata, which consists of around 355 species and more being discovered every year while others are going extinct due to habitat destruction, fragmentation and pesticides.

The following information will help you create a happy and healthy home for your new pet turtle.

Choosing a home for your newt.

Newts appreciate a terrarium set up containing a partitioned side consisting of land and terrestrial plants and the other with water and aquatic plants (Japanese Fire bellied newts do less roaming and so a smaller piece of land is acceptable). If floating plants are not incorporated into the design of the waterside a lily pad or a piece of floating cork will serve as additional places for your newt to escape the water. This is where your creativity comes into play. Babbling waterfalls and sphagnum moss divided by a piece of driftwood all twisting into a serene little pool, glorious! Tank size should be 20-50 gallons for colonies of one male and two-three females and larger for bigger colonies or 10-15 gallons for a single specimen.

Adding substrate.

Substrate is not necessary if you the basic set up outlined in the "step by step set up" section. However if you are looking for a more eye pleasing environment you can create

all types of vivarium and or aquarium set up's. Do some further research and use your imagination. You will be surprised what you can make come alive.

Décor.

You can add decorations to your newts' tank for example wood, rocks or plants. Newts will actively investigate and climb on everything in their environment. Be sure to clean these items thoroughly before adding them to your newts' new home.

Heating and lighting.

Temperatures ranging 50-75°F (10-22°C) are acceptable with extended drops as low as 40°F (5°C) for periods of hibernation. This low temperature requirement makes these animals best kept in places like the basement; garage and laundry room but regular temperature readings should be taken to determine if the location needs to be changed.

A florescent light or incandescent plant light (if live plants are used) can be used though incandescent lights produce a great deal of heat and can increase the overall temperature of the enclosure. There is no data indicating the need for a full spectrum light. Avoid intense lighting as newts prefer lower light levels.

Newt food.

Good nutrition is one of the keys to keeping your newt happy and healthy. A diet consisting of HBH's Newt and Salamander Bites as a staple can be varied with earthworm, "small" crickets, white worms, slugs, wing-less fruit flies, brine shrimp, dafnia and black worms. A varied diet is essential for good natural growth of your newt. Always remove any uneaten food from your newts' habitat to help reduce fouling the water.

Filters.

However you decide to set up your newts' enclosure, water filtration is essential. Newts are slow for their size and the temperatures they live in. This combination is detrimental to the newt in that it can now be swam to death in to strong a current and has the inability to swim away from strong intake tubes, drowning the creature. Still good filtration has only one side effect, good water quality! Power heads should be avoided as they create too strong a current and can elevate water temperatures.

Water changes.

Along with good filtration weekly water changes will need to be carried out in the amount of 20-30% of water volume. The aquatic portion of the enclosure will need to be vacuumed while mechanical filters and live plants help to reduce detritus and ammonia. Newts absorb everything through their skin. Imagine that. As you change the water in your new pets home don't forget to dechlorinate the replacement water first.