



Care Sheet

Maximum Size

Tea cup to dinner plate size

Water Quality

Salinity: 1.023 – 1.025
(30 – 34 ppt)

Temperature:
25°C - 27°C

pH: 8.1 – 8.4

Carbonate Hardness:
100 - 200 ppm

Introduction to Corals

What is a coral?

Corals are saltwater/marine invertebrates that are sometimes solitary but generally live in groups or colonies of compact identical polyps (Tiny Animals that resemble an upside down jellyfish). Polyps can range in size from a few millimetres to many centimetres in length/width and often have a set of mobile tentacles serving a central mouth in order to feed. Feeding assists with a corals growth which is done by excretion of an exoskeleton near its base.

Live Corals for the Marine Aquarium

Live corals, both wild collected and captively conditioned, are increasingly popular additions to saltwater/marine aquariums, providing colour, movement and most importantly, structure and habitat for the other inhabitants of the aquarium. Similar to marine fish, corals originate from very stable environments. For this reason, water quality is particularly important to ensure the long-term health of your “home reef environment” and that your corals grow and thrive. Specialist filtration equipment such as protein skimmers are also required.

1-3

Corals can be kept in tanks of all shapes and sizes, from nano tanks up to extra-large display aquariums. Generally, if there is sufficient space for the coral to expand its polyps without touching its neighbour, stocking density can be as high as is manageable.

Upkeep of water quality parameters, correct lighting along with feeding of certain corals types will greatly assist their growth and ability to take up tank space so this should be taken into account when positioning pieces.

Just as they do in their natural environment where reef real estate is at a premium, certain corals may fight or compete with each other if they should come into contact. Almost every coral can sting or be stung so corals that are touching each other should always be carefully separated. Care should also be taken when we handle our corals as human skin is not immune from this coral weaponry. Wearing gloves is always a good idea when handling.

There are 2 basic types of corals, namely Soft Corals and Hard Corals. Soft Corals are just that and have no hard skeleton and these include corals such as Corallimorphs, Zoanthids, Leather and Tree Corals to name a few. Hard Corals are defined by a hard calcium skeleton with the animal living inside. Within the Hard Corals there are 2 subcategories including LPS (Large Polyp Stony) and SPS (Small Polyp Stony). More information can be found on our website, but LPS are generally hardy and easier to care for in terms of water quality and feeding, whereas the SPS can be more challenging with more attention to water quality required.



Photo Credit: Monsoon Aquatics