

## Important Tips on Neon Tetra Care

Neon tetras are officially classified to the family Characidae. To most of the world they are known as Characins. This family includes 776 species in 152 different genera. Neons are indigenous to Northwest and Central Brazil, including the Amazon River and its tributaries.

Neons are one of the most popular choices among freshwater aquarists. They only grow to a little over an inch in length. This makes them perfect for smaller applications like the thin-line wall mounted aquariums and desktop nano tanks that have become so popular in recent years.

Neon tetras have translucent bodies. Their nearly see through bodies don't stop them for being one of the most colorful fish you can buy for a freshwater aquarium. Juxtaposed against the bodies is a dual set of color extravaganza. A luminescent blue racing stripe runs from head to tail. Underneath the metallic blue, a brilliant red stripe begins at mid-body and travels back to the base of their tail fin.

Yet another member of the tetra family you may wish to consider for visual interest is the cardinal tetra. Cardinal tetras are slightly more colorful than neons. The brilliant red stripe that is present in the posterior section of a neon's body runs throughout the entire length of the cardinal's. This does increase visual interest from a color standpoint. The increase in color, however, greatly reduces the translucent aspect of this species bodies. The choice boils down to a question of color over transparency. You may wish to consider the fact that cardinals are much less likely to breed in captivity than neons before making a final decision.

Neons are by nature a skittish species. They spook rather easily. They are also very small fish that could easily be perceived as a source of nutrition by larger species. They do however make excellent community fish if you take these factors into consideration. An abundance of plants and or rockwork will provide sufficient hiding place and help them feel confident in their new surroundings. Avoid keeping them with species that will grow large enough to ingest them. Following these simple rules will keep your neons healthy, happy and most importantly, alive!

Tetras are shoaling fish. Shoaling fish are highly social animals. They should always be kept in a group rather than as a single species. This allows them to commune as they would in nature. Buying a single neon will greatly reduce its chances of properly acclimating to its new surroundings. A minimum of four neon tetras in a tank is advisable.

The strong community instinct in tetras does have a down side. Tetras have a tendency to be fin nippers. This characteristic is more apt to become problematic in a well established group. It is advisable no to house a tetra community with fish with full, billowing fins. Angelfish, bettas, and fancy tailed guppies are a definite no, no in an aquarium with a school of fin nippers in it.

Water in South America is slightly acidic, around pH 6.8. Water temperature ranges from 70-79F. Your neons will thrive in similar conditions. This is an omnivorous species that will remain perfectly healthy on a diet consisting of common tropical fish flakes. Neon Tetras have a lifespan of up to 10 years, normally about 5 in an aquarium.

Neon tetras were one of the original species that sparked what is now the global aquarium trade industry. The mass export of these fish, first to Europe and then to the US in the mid-twentieth century, brought the phrase "tropical fish" to the forefront among freshwater aquarists. The initial appeal of these previously unknown exotic little beauties commanded incredibly steep prices. Most of the neons sold on the market today are commercially raised. This keeps them very affordable and puts them well within reach of any budget minded aquarist.

## About the Author

Neon tetras are tiny compared to many freshwater species. They should not be housed with larger species. Any [wall mount aquarium](#) would make a perfect environment. If you found this article educational, learn more interesting tidbits about the most popular [freshwater aquarium fish](#) by seeing our fish buying guide.

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