

Australian Turtle Care Guide

TEMPERAMENT

Generally Clam

HANDLE-ABILITY

Hard - Handling NOT Recommended

LIFESPAN

15-25 years

MINIMUM TANK SIZE

120x60x60cm

TEMPERATURE RANGE

18-24°C

HUMIDITY RANGE

General: 50-60%

During Shedding: 65-70%

UVB

5.0 UVB

TANK MATES

Fish (Sometimes if raised with them)

FEEDING

Insects, Fish, Vegetables, Aquatic Plants, Bloodworms, Turtle Pellets/ Blocks

SAFE FLORA

Most Standard Aquarium Plants

HABITAT SETUP

Enclosure

- A large tank or pond is essential—at least 4ft for juveniles, 6ft+ for adults with secure lid or fencing prevents escapes.

Water & Filtration

- Water temp: 24-26°C (juveniles), 22-24°C (adults).
- Partial water changes (25-50%) weekly to prevent bacteria & detritus buildup.

Basking Area & UVB Lighting

- A dry basking area (30-35°C) is essential for warmth and shell health.
- UVB light (10-12 hours/day) supports bone and shell development.

Substrate & Decor

- Smooth river stones or bare-bottom tanks prevent shell damage.
- Avoid sharp gravel, which can be swallowed.
- Provide hiding spots and logs for enrichment.

FEEDING

Diet

- Omnivores: Eat aquatic insects, worms, fish, shrimp, and leafy greens.
- Commercial turtle pellets provide balanced nutrition.

Feeding Schedule

- Juveniles: Daily.
- Adults: Every 2-3 days.
- Remove uneaten food to keep water clean.

HANDLING

Handle turtles as little as possible to avoid stress

- **When Necessary:** Use clean hands, or gloves to gently scoop the turtle, supporting its body. Wash before and after to stop bacteria spread

HEALTH MONITORING:

Keeping an eye on your turtle's health is essential for early detection of issues. Common signs of illness include:

- **Soft shell:** Can indicate calcium deficiency or lack of UVB exposure. Ensure proper lighting and diet.
- **Swollen eyes:** Often caused by vitamin A deficiency or poor water quality. Provide a varied diet and clean water.
- **Lethargy:** If your turtle is less active, not eating, or basking excessively, it may be sick or stressed.
- **Shell rot:** Discolored, soft, or foul-smelling patches on the shell can indicate a fungal or bacterial infection. Ensure a dry basking area and clean water.

LIGHTING AND HEAT

- **UVB light:**(10-12 hours/day) is essential for shell and bone health. Use a 10.0 UVB bulb.
- **Basking spot:** 30-35°C with a heat lamp.
- **Water temperature:** 24-26°C (juveniles), 22-24°C (adults).

Provide a cool area so your turtle can regulate its body temperature.



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SHOPPING CART

- UVB 2.0 Bulb & Dome
- Thermometer
- Aquarium Heater
- Aquarium Gravel
- 120x60x60cm
- Heat Lamp Bulb & Dome
- Feeding tongs
- Driftwood
- Aquatic Plants
- On/Off Timer (Optional)
- Tap Water Conditioner & Bacteria
- Turtle Dock
- Aquarium Filter



ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT

Enclosure

- A large tank or pond is essential—at least 4ft for juveniles, 6ft+ for adults with secure lid or fencing prevents escapes.

Water & Filtration

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- Partial water changes (25-50%) weekly to prevent bacteria & detritus buildup.

Basking Area & UVB Lighting

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- UVB light (10-12 hours/day) supports bone and shell development.

SHEDDING CARE

Turtles shed their scutes (outer shell layers) as they grow. Proper shedding keeps the shell healthy and prevents infections.

Humidity & Moisture

- A fully dry basking area is essential for healthy shedding.
- Water temperature should be 24-26°C (juveniles), 22-24°C (adults) to support natural shedding.
- Excess humidity can cause fungal infections—keep basking areas dry.

Substrate Considerations

- Smooth river stones or bare-bottom tanks prevent shell damage.
- Avoid rough gravel, as it can be swallowed or scratch the shell.
- Clean water and a strong filter help prevent shell infections.

SIZE & SEX

Juvenile

- Small and fragile, usually around 3-5 cm when hatched.
- Require shallow water to prevent drowning.

Adult

- Size varies by species:
- Eastern Long-necked Turtle: 20-25 cm shell length.
- Murray River Turtle: 30-40 cm shell length.
- Saw-shelled Turtle: 15-25 cm shell length.

Sexual Dimorphism

- Females are often larger than males in many species.
- Males have longer tails and larger claws.
- Cloaca (vent) position is closer to the edge of the shell in males.

Growth Rate

- Rapid growth in the first 1-3 years, then slows.
- With proper care, turtles can live 30+ years.

TANK MAINTENANCE

- **Daily:** Remove uneaten food, waste, and debris to keep water clean.
- **Weekly:** Perform a 25-50% water change and clean the filter intake. Scrub algae from the tank walls if needed.
- **Monthly:** Deep clean the tank, rinse filters, and check equipment (heaters, lights, and pumps) to ensure everything is functioning properly.