



Baby Map Turtle Care Guide

Presented by Custom Creatures Pet Shop

Basic Info

Species: Graptemys spp. (Map Turtle - e.g., Mississippi, False, or Ouachita Map Turtle)

Lifespan: 30-50+ years in captivity

Adult Size: 3-10 inches depending on species and sex

Temperament: Active swimmers and shy baskers - not ideal for handling

Best for: Intermediate keepers with aquatic setup experience

Enclosure Setup

Tank Size:

- Babies: 20-30 gallon tank minimum
- Adults: 75-125 gallon or large outdoor pond
- Water depth should be at least 2-3x their length

Temperature & Heating:

- Water temp: 75-80°F (use submersible heater)
- Basking area: 90-95°F
- Ambient air temp: 75-80°F

Filtration & Water Quality:

- High-quality filtration (canister filter preferred)
- Perform 25-50% water changes weekly

- Use water conditioner for tap water

Lighting:

- UVB lighting required (T5 HO 5.0 or 10.0)
- Provide 12-hour light/dark cycle

Basking Dock:

- Provide a stable, fully dry basking dock or platform
- Must be easy to access and under heat and UVB lighting

Substrate (Optional):

- Bare bottom or smooth river rocks (no small gravel)
- Include floating or anchored plants and driftwood for enrichment

Diet & Feeding

Feeding Frequency:

- Babies: Feed daily
- Adults: Feed every other day

Diet:

- Commercial aquatic turtle pellets
- Protein: bloodworms, brine shrimp, dubia roaches, feeder fish (occasionally)
- Vegetation: duckweed, anacharis, romaine, dandelion greens

Supplementation:

- Provide a cuttlebone or calcium block in the tank
- Dust feeder insects with calcium occasionally

Water & Hydration:

- Turtles eat and drink in water
- Clean, dechlorinated water is essential for health

Handling & Behavior

Handling:

- Not recommended - easily stressed and may scratch or flee
- Observe rather than handle

Behavior to Expect:

- Diurnal and very active swimmers
- Will bask but may be skittish
- Recognize feeding times and may interact with keepers

Supplies Checklist

- 20-30 gallon tank for babies
- Submersible heater and water thermometer
- UVB bulb and basking bulb
- Basking dock or platform
- High-quality filter and water conditioner
- Aquatic turtle pellets and leafy greens
- Calcium block or cuttlebone
- Enrichment items (plants, driftwood, decor)

Contact Us

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We're here to help!