**Axolotl Care Sheet**



**Basic Information**

* Common Name: Axolotl
* Scientific Name: Ambystoma mexicanum
* Lifespan: 10–15 years with proper care
* Size: 6–12 inches (15–30 cm)
* Origin: Lakes of Xochimilco, Mexico

**Habitat & Tank Setup**

**Tank Size**

* Minimum 20 gallons for one axolotl
* Long tanks preferred over tall ones

**Water Temperature**

* Ideal range: 60–68°F (16–20°C)
* Never exceed 72°F – heat stress is dangerous
* Use an aquarium fan or chiller if needed

**Water Quality**

* pH: 6.5–8.0
* Ammonia/Nitrites: 0 ppm (toxic)
* Nitrates: < 20–40 ppm
* Filtration: Sponge filter or low-flow external filter
* Cycling: Fully cycle tank before introducing your axolotl
* Weekly 20–30% water changes with dechlorinated water

**Substrate**

* Bare bottom or fine sand only
* Avoid gravel, axolotls may ingest it and become impacted

**Decor & Enrichment**

* Provide hides (caves, PVC pipes, aquarium-safe ornaments)
* Add live or silk plants for cover
* Avoid sharp edges and strong currents

**Diet & Feeding**

**Diet**

* Carnivorous
* Feed a variety of:
	+ Earthworms (nightcrawlers), Crickets (off tongs)
	+ Axolotl pellets
	+ Bloodworms (as treats)

**Feeding Schedule**

* Juveniles: Daily
* Adults: Every 2–3 days
* Remove uneaten food to avoid water quality issues

**Handling & Health**

**Handling**

* Avoid handling- axolotls are amphibians that can absorb toxins and oils from your hands into their skin which can cause illness
* Use a soft net or container to move them

**Common Health Issues**

* Ammonia burns (from poor water quality)
* Fungal infections (white cottony patches)
* Impaction (from ingesting gravel or large food items)
* Floating (can indicate gas, stress, or illness)

**Behavior & Compatibility**

* Solitary but tolerant: Can house multiple axolotls of similar size in a large tank, but watch for aggression
* No fish tankmates: Most fish nip at their gills or get eaten
* Active at dusk/dawn, rest during the day

**Quick Tips**

* Always dechlorinate water
* Monitor temperature during hot months
* Avoid bright lighting – axolotls prefer dim environments
* Never mix different sizes or species in one tank