

# Cherry Shrimp Breeding [Everything You Need To Know]

Breeding cherry shrimps is fun, and it is easier too comparing with other shrimp species. If you ensure the basic things that cherry shrimps need, they'll breed automatically. You don't have to provide any extra care.

However, for optimum breeding and getting the maximum amount of shrimp offsprings, you'll need to follow some guidelines. In this article, I'll offer that exact cherry shrimp breeding guideline to you.

This guideline is a combination of my years of shrimp keeping experience along with the learning from hundreds of books and articles. I'll explain everything in easy words so that you can understand and follow the guideline to the T.

Also, for your convenience, here I am attaching a **printable version of the guideline** so that you can print it out and study more conveniently. The guide will be long and packed with information, so if you can't finish reading at one sitting, bookmark the page and come to where you finished later on.

Enough with the introduction, let's get started with how to breed cherry shrimps.

I have divided this guide into two parts: Essentials and Factors that increase the survival rate.

## Essentials

Under the essentials, I have described all the factors that are a must for [breeding cherry shrimps](#). Not only for breeding, if you want to provide a healthier life to your cherry shrimps, you'll have to ensure each of these factors.

I'll explain each of them in details:

### Filter

Many shrimp keepers often make the mistake of not buying a filter for their shrimp tank. They think that as shrimps are tiny creatures, they won't [need any filter](#). A heavily planted tank will be able to work as a filtration for the shrimp tank. The truth cannot be any more further than the truth.

Cherry shrimps do need filters. In fact, filtration is more important for cherry shrimps compared to many other species. Shrimps are pretty delicate creature and they are susceptible to slight changes in the water parameters.

So, we'll have to ensure the water parameters are in the correct range, consistent and overall, the water quality is excellent. For these, we'll definitely need a filter in our shrimp tank. It is more important for breeding cherry shrimps.

Fortunately, for a shrimp only tank, there is no need to invest a fortune for a filter. For shrimp tanks, a good sponge filter is enough. Sponge filters are preferable for shrimp tanks because of the following reasons:

- sponge filters don't create any strong current that can suck the baby shrimps like a Hang On Back or Canister filter
- The sponges have great surface area for growing biofilm over them. The cherry shrimps love to graze on these biofilms over the sponges.
- The sponges are a great medium to grow beneficial bacteria colony that breaks up the ammonia and quickens the nitrogen cycle.
- Also, sponge filters are not expensive like a HOB or Canister filter and they do the required job perfectly

So, for all these reasons, a sponge filter is a perfect choice for a shrimp only tank. There are hundreds of sponge filters in the market from different brands. You can choose either one you like, but ensure the filter is actually good enough to cope with the load of the tank.

If you ask me, I'll recommend to get the [sponge filter from Powkoo](#). Why? Here are the reasons:

### Powkoo Sponge Filter



This sponge filter from Powkoo offers some exciting features that most other brands don't. Here are some of the features you'll get with it:

- Most sponge filters only have the ability to provide biological filtration. But this one from Powkoo can provide mechanical filtration as well.

- The sponges are designed with a double 10 layer shape that offers a considerably larger surface area than other sponge filters.
- Can be suitable for tanks up to 30 gallons.

So, that's why I always recommend to start filtration with a Powkoo sponge filter, if you are having a shrimp only tank. The price is a lot cheaper too! [Click here](#) to check out the latest price on Amazon.

## Hang On Back filter

I have already told that for a shrimp tank, a sponge filter will be perfect. There is no need to get a hang on back or canister filter. However, if the tank is not shrimp-only and there are other tank mates, then a simple sponge filter might not be able to do the job perfectly. In such cases, you'll need a hang on back filter.

Hang on Back filters are little bit pricier than sponge filters, but they are worth the cost. Like sponge filters, they don't sit inside the tank taking up a considerable amount of space. Hang On Back filters, as the name suggests, are placed behind the aquarium or at any of the sides.

There are lots of HOB filters in the market. If you ask me, I'll recommend the [penguin model from Marineland](#). I have been using it for years without facing any problem or so.

*Note: If you are using a Hang On Back filter in your shrimp tank, cover the inlets of the filter with a layer of filter media. It is required to prevent the baby shrimps from getting sucked inside the filter.*

## Water

For cherry shrimps, the water source can be versatile. You can use tap water, well water or even RO water (reverse osmosis). As cherry shrimps are not as demanding as Caridina shrimps, they will do perfectly fine in tap water.

However, for breeding purposes, I've seen better results with RO water. RO water basically means that it is pure water. No minerals or anything is added to it. Now, shrimps don't like this type of distilled water. For a shrimp tank, you'll need to mix some [shrimp minerals](#) with the water. This mineral is also called shrimp salt.

It will ensure the water contains enough of the important nutrients for the optimum breeding of cherry shrimps.

I am telling again, this RO water + shrimp mineral mixture is not needed for breeding cherry shrimps. However, if you can do that, you'll be surprised at the number and the quality of the offsprings.

## Water Parameters

Water parameters are extremely important for keeping shrimps. Before explaining them, here is a chart that shows the required water parameter ranges for cherry shrimp:

Temperature	70 to 75 Degrees Fahrenheit
pH	6.5 to 7.5
GH	6-8 ppm
KH	1-4 ppm
TDS	150-250 ppm

### Temperature

Temperature is extremely important for cherry shrimps. Cherry shrimps can withstand a wide range of temperatures. But the ideal range for them is between 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

If the temperature is any more or less than that, then it can affect the shrimp's life in many ways. Here is a chart that shows how temperature affects a cherry shrimp's life:

<b>Higher Temperature</b>	<b>Lower Temperature</b>
Shorter lifespan	Longer lifespan
Eats more often	Eats less
Molts more frequently	Molts less frequently
Breeds quicker	Breeds slowly
Lower offspring quality	Higher offspring quality

### pH

pH stands for Potential of Hydrogen. It measures how much acidic or alkaline the water is. pH is measure on a scale from 0 to 14. 7 means a neutral value. 0 means extremely acidic whereas 14 means completely alkaline. The ideal range for cherry shrimps is 6.5 to 7.5

You can easily measure the pH of the shrimp tank with this API master water test kit. There are other cheap options available to measure the pH. But the reason I am

suggesting you to get this water test kit is because, with this kit, you can measure a lot of parameters along with the pH like- nitrite, nitrate, ammonia, etc. It's an all-in-one solution for measuring water parameters.

You can check out the latest price of this [water test kit](#) here on Amazon.

### **GH and KH**

GH stands for General Hardness and KH stands for Carbonate Hardness. GH measures the amount of dissolved magnesium and calcium in the water. KH indicates the stability of the pH in the water. The older an aquarium is, the lower will be the KH value. Both GH and KH are measured in ppm (Parts Per Million).

You can measure both GH and KH of the shrimp tank with this [measurement kit](#).

### **TDS**

TDS stands for Total Dissolved Solids. It measures the total amount of substances dissolved in the water, except for the H<sub>2</sub>O molecules. A higher TDS value indicates that the shrimp tank needs a water change.

You can measure the TDS value with this [TDS meter](#).

### **Some Tips**

- When it comes to water parameters, it is more important to be consistent than hitting the ideal range. If the range in your shrimp tank is off by some value, it won't be the end of the world. However, if the water parameters are not consistent and they spike every now and then, you'll face a massive problem.
- For keeping the temperature consistent, it is helpful to get a bigger tank. A 2 feet tank will be easier for beginners to breed cherry shrimps than a 1 foot tank. That's why, unlike many beginners making the mistake of buying a small shrimp tank, you should go for one as big as your budget allows.

### **Tank Mates**



Tank Mates are extremely important for cherry shrimps. Their survival depends on it. I'll talk about tank mates in two senses:

**If you are a shrimp keeper**

If you are an average shrimp keeper, then try to keep the tank mate number as low as possible. As shrimps are very little creatures, they are hunted down by almost all other fishes.

Even the small schooling fish is seeing bullying the shrimp babies. So, try to keep the tank mate as low as possible. Also, before getting any tank mate, do proper research and see [which tank mates are suitable](#) for keeping with cherry shrimps.

Here is a table that I've made to show the suitable tank mates for cherry shrimp:

<b>Good Tank Mates</b>	<b>Bad Tank Mates</b>
Other shrimp species	Any fish that are aggressive such as Barbs, Mollies, Serpea Tetra, Betta, etc
Dwarf suckers	Cichlids
Small rasboras	Discus

<b>Good Tank Mates</b>	<b>Bad Tank Mates</b>
Small Tetras	Angelfish
Snails	Fishes with a large mouth to gulp the shrimp in a single instance

As you can see, any fish that has a mouth large enough to fit the shrimp inside, can try to eat the shrimp. Also look out for fishes that are territorial, aggressive or temperamental.

### **If you are a shrimp breeder**

If you consider yourself a shrimp breeder, then I'll definitely recommend you to not get any tank mates. Tank mates will create terror in your baby shrimp's life, no matter how careful you are choosing them. Some shrimp breeders even observed Otocinclus fishes trying to eat a baby cherry shrimp.

However, you can keep some snails with the shrimps. Snails are perfect companions for a shrimp tank. In fact, later on, I talk about why you should keep snails in a shrimp tank.

## **Factors That Increase Survival Rate**

The factors that I'll be describing under this section is not a must for breeding cherry shrimps. Your cherry shrimps will breed without ensuring them.

However, if you want optimum quality offspring and maximum number of babies, then I'll recommend you to pay close attention to each of these factors. They are necessary for creating the optimum breeding environment for cherry shrimps. Also, they increase the survival rate of the babies considerably too.

So, here are the factors explained in details:

### **Moss & Plants**





Moss and plants are extremely important for a cherry shrimp tank. I talk about this in detail in my [cherry shrimp care guide](#). They are even more important for breeding cherry shrimps.

Here's why you need lots of moss and plants for breeding cherry shrimps:

- Both moss and plants provide an excellent hiding spot for the baby cherry shrimps. After hatching, during the first few days, the babies like to hide and don't come out in the open. It is required for their safety and survival. In this period, having lots of moss and plants will be beneficial for the babies as they will be able to hide within these. Also, these increases the survival rate of the baby shrimps. Without the presence of enough moss and plants, your baby cherry shrimps can fall victim to other tank mates. However, if they can hide within the plants, the other tank mates won't be able to hunt the babies down.
- Moss and plants provide a good surface are for algae and biofilm to grow. Though we don't want algae in our tank, they are an excellent source of food for the shrimps. Even, baby cherry shrimps live on these biofilms and algae for the first few days. So, it is necessary to have a good amount of biofilm in the tank. Plants and mosses ensure that well.
- The other benefit of having lots of plants and moss is, they help to filter the water and keep the water clean and pristine. Also, plants oxygenate the water which is crucial for the health of the baby shrimps. Plants break down ammonia into lesser harmful chemicals and speed up the nitrogen cycle. All in all, plants and moss are very important for ensuring a higher survival rate of the baby cherry shrimps.

For moss, I'll recommend Java Moss without any doubt. They are cheap and shrimps get crazy over them. Also, click here to know my recommendation about the [best plants for cherry shrimps](#).



## Driftwood



Driftwood is not only an awesome decorative piece for a shrimp tank, they are beneficial too. Here are the benefits of keeping driftwood in the shrimp tank:

- driftwood is perfect as a hiding place for the baby shrimps. It has lots of holes throughout the surface. The babies can perfectly hide there.
- Driftwood has a good surface area to grow biofilm. As I have mentioned earlier, biofilm is a staple food source for babies as well as adult cherry shrimps. So, by having a piece of driftwood in the shrimp tank, you can ensure a good food source for the shrimps.
- Driftwood leeches tannin with time. The tannin can be beneficial as it lowers the pH value.

There are some drawbacks to keeping driftwood as well. It can increase the TDS value considerably. As I have explained earlier, higher TDS value means you'll need to perform a water change.

Also, too much driftwood can release an excessive amount of tannin which can cause harm rather than any good to the baby cherry shrimps.

## Leaves



Leaves are a very popular choice to put in the shrimp tank too. They have almost similar benefits of having driftwood in the shrimp tank. Leaves also release tannins. However, they offer a much larger surface area to grow biofilm. If you ask me to choose between leaves and driftwood, I'll go with leaves.

Some of the popular leaf choices for shrimp tank are:

- Indian Almond Leaves or IAL
- Nettle Leaves
- Guava leaves
- Walnut leaves
- Spinach leaves etc.

Among all these options, the most popular one is the Indian Almond Leaves. They cost next to nothing, and if you are lucky, you can find them for free around your neighborhood. Shrimps love Indian Almond Leaves in the tank. It is great for the baby shrimps too.

Shrimp keepers also put spinach leaves in the shrimp tank. But its purpose is not the same as the Indian Almond Leaf. The spinach leaf is provided as a direct food source that shrimps love to eat.

Once or twice a month, I get a small piece of spinach leaf (about 5 x 5 cm size). I boil it for a couple of minutes and then place the spinach on the feeding dish. The shrimps get crazy over it. The spinach brings a nice change to the diet and adds more nutritional value too. After about 10-20 minutes, I take out the leftover spinach so that the water quality doesn't deteriorate.

## **Snails**



• Malaysian Trumpet Snail



• Nerite Snail

I have said many times, tank mates are not preferable for a shrimp tank. However, there is one tank mate that is not only preferable, but recommended to have in a shrimp tank. And that is snails.

Snails are very important for a shrimp tank as they help to create an ecosystem. There are lots of types of snails that provide lots of benefits. For a breeding cherry shrimp tank, our choice is limited. We can't choose any snail as some snails can become a threat to the baby cherry shrimps, like Assassin Snails.

For my cherry shrimp tank, I like to keep Malaysian Trumpet Snail and Nerite Snail.

Malaysian Trumpet Snails are really helpful because of the following reasons:

- They aerate the substrate
- eat dead plant and animal matters
- clean algae by eating them
- the shrimps eat snail poop which creates a good ecosystem

I also love to keep nerite snails as they are wonderful algae eater. If your cherry shrimp tank has lots of algae and they can't seem to eat them all alone, you can consider adding some nerite snails.

### Quality Food

Cherry shrimps mainly eat 3 types of foods:

1. Algae and Biofilm
2. Commercial Shrimp Food
3. Blanched Vegetable

You don't have to do anything for the first one. Algae and biofilm grow naturally in the shrimp tank. So, there will be plenty of that automatically.

Also, blanched vegetable is not a must. Once in a while, providing some blanched vegetables offers a good change in the diet. And it is good for the nutritional value too. But you don't have to provide that on a daily basis.

The thing we need to concern ourselves with is offering a good commercial shrimp food. Cherry shrimps don't get all the nutrition they require from algae and biofilm alone. They also need something extra that can provide them protein, mineral and the required vitamin for proper growth. And that's where commercial shrimp food comes in.



There are lots of options in the market. But I love [Bacter AE](#) for my cherry shrimps and their babies. Bacter AE is a complete shrimp food solution. It has all the minerals and vitamins that your baby shrimps will need for proper growth.

The other thing I love about Bacter AE is, the food comes in a powder form. When you dump the required amount in the tank, the food particles spread all over the tank. This gives the shrimp babies a chance to look for the food and eat them. Otherwise, they won't be able to compete with the adult shrimps for a single piece of food.

Some other good options for commercial shrimp food can be:

- Shrimp dinner
- Mineral Junkie
- Shrimp King Complete
- Shrimp King Mineral

Here is a tip while feeding cherry shrimps:

Always [feed](#) less than the amount instructed in the food container. It is absolutely okay. Your shrimps won't starve. Feeding less amount ensures the water remains clean and healthy for a longer amount of time. Also, use feeding dishes if you can. This makes the whole feeding process much more organized and less messy.

## **Water Changes**

Water changes are crucial for maintaining a healthy environment in the shrimp tank. I perform 20-30% water change on a weekly basis. It helps to keep the water parameters consistent.

Also, you can use the TDS meter to check if the tank needs a water change or not. If the TDS value reads more than 250ppm, then you'll need to perform a partial water change.

Whenever changing water, if you are using RO water to replace the old one, don't forget to mix Shrimp Minerals with it. This is necessary for the healthy growth of the shrimps.

## **Light**

Lighting is not necessary for breeding. The shrimps also don't need lighting for anything. Lighting is mainly for us and the plants. Here are a couple of pointers you should keep in mind regarding lights:

- Don't keep the lights ON for too long. It'll disrupt the lives of the shrimps. In my cherry shrimp tank, I keep the lights ON for 7-8 hours.
- It is better if you can use a light timer so that the light can turn ON and OFF at the exact time every day. This way, you won't have to worry about the light remaining ON for too long.

## **Mineral Stones**



Personally, I don't use mineral stones in my shrimp tank. But I heard they are beneficial for the baby shrimps as well as the adults. If you are using RO water and mixing it with shrimp mineral, there is no need for you to get mineral stones.

Personally, I am not a big fan of these because they don't last long and I don't think they are an absolute necessity for the shrimps.

## **Plant Supplements**

Planted tanks and shrimps go in hand to hand for many of us. As shrimps require plants in their tank, many of us set up planted tank for the shrimps. In a planted tank, we have both the plants and the shrimps. But, we need to keep in mind that the health of the shrimps is always more important than the plants.

If you want to use plant supplements like liquid fertilizer or root tabs for the plants, check the label clearly. Anything that contains iron or copper is not safe for the shrimps at all. Even a tiny amount can prove to be deadly for the shrimps.

Also, no matter how safe a plant supplement is, dosing it regularly can bring an adverse effect on the health of the cherry shrimps.

## **Tips From My Experience**

Now, I'll share some tips that I have learned from my years of shrimp breeding experience:

1. If you are a serious breeder and want to pursue breeding as a business, then pay attention to the species. Never mix different types of species in the tank. It will result in lower quality offspring with dodgy color. With more generations, the color will soon turn transparent or something undesirable.
2. For monetary purposes, always keep your breeding tanks specific to each species.
3. Many new shrimp breeders think that breeding shrimp can turn their fortune around. I am sorry to break it to you, breeding shrimps will not make you the next Bill Gates. It even hardly covers my shrimp keeping expense. Yes, you'll get some money selling the babies, but it is not enough to replace a full-time job.
4. Don't start with expensive breeds of shrimps. I have seen many shrimp breeders making this mistake. The more expensive a shrimp is, generally the harder it will be to breed that shrimp. That's why when you are new and don't have any personal experience with shrimp keeping, start with an easy species. Cherry shrimps are perfect for beginner shrimp breeders to start their shrimp breeding journey.
5. Lastly, always be consistent. Consistent is the key to breeding shrimps. Keep everything consistent including the temperature, pH, GH, KH, feeding schedule, etc. This is what makes a difference in the end.

## Conclusion

As you can see, breeding cherry shrimps is not difficult. Basically, if you follow the guidelines from the [cherry shrimp care guide](#), you'll see your shrimps breed automatically.

But, if you can walk the extra mile and ensure some special care to the cherry shrimps, they will offer you the maximum number of babies. So, it's up to you what you want to do. But I'll always recommend to give your cherry shrimps the special care they deserve.