

# Keeping Tadpoles as Pets

## Can I keep tadpoles at home?



Yes- it's a great way to see how a frog develops.

But before you collect the frogspawn you will need to have all the necessary equipment to keep your tadpoles happy and safe. Below are some 2 month old tadpoles.



## What you need before you start



- › A **clean plastic container** or fish tank (4-5 litre capacity).
- › **Pond or rain water** (or even bottled water or treated tap-water).
- › ***Without treatment tap water has chlorine in it which will kill tadpoles.***
- › A **calm space** out of direct sunlight near a window or outside.

## Where can I find frogspawn and tadpoles?

At the beginning of spring frogs lay their eggs in clumps in ponds.

*Check the edges of ponds in gardens or nearby parks, or take a trip to the nearest woods and look for them in ponds.*

- Bring **2 clean jars with screw tops**.
- Lie down at the edge of the water and reach in to **scoop** up some frogspawn or some tadpoles. Use the **second jar to top up the water**.
- Try to collect some **underwater plants**. Put them in the other jar with more water from the pond. You can use this water to fill your tank.



## What do tadpoles eat?

Young tadpoles first eat their way out of the egg mass. Then they feed by **scraping** at the leaves of **pond weed**. They also like **fresh lettuce** and **baby spinach**. Before you feed them, **rinse the leaves thoroughly**.

We are feeding the school tadpoles pond weed and dried worms:



Tadpoles only need a **little bit of food**. It is very important that their **water is clean all the time**, so change the leaves if they start to look sad!

As tadpoles get bigger they will eat anything they can! You can feed them with flakes of **fish fry food** from a pet shop.

When tadpoles **grow legs** they become **carnivorous** (meat eaters). They will **eat each other** unless you provide meat for them. Small pieces of meat can be suspended in the water on a piece of string. **Change the meat every day**.



## Caring for your tadpoles

Your tadpoles will thrive if they are **properly cared for** and you will see them grow. See some tips for caring for your tadpoles below.

1. ***Make sure the water is clean.*** Change the water if it becomes cloudy. Remember to only use **rain water** or water **collected from a pond**. You can use tap water if it has been allowed to stand for about three days or if it has been specially treated.
2. Try to keep the **water temperature steady** and between **15 and 20 degrees C**.
3. ***Never change the water temperature suddenly as this is likely to kill the tadpoles.***
4. If you leave your tank outdoors or near a window make sure it is in a **shady place**.



## What's next?

Later your tadpoles will gradually **grow front legs, lose their tails**, and transform into **baby frogs**. Baby frogs are sometimes called **froglets**. Here are some tiny froglets:



When the tadpoles grow legs they will need a way to get out of the water. You can put some **stones or twigs for them to climb**. It might take **6-12 weeks** for them to reach this stage.

Once they develop into frogs they are ready to be **released** at a site near a **pond** and after growing into adults they can **start a new life cycle**

