

<http://www.midtowncarnivores.com>



**GENERAL CARE:** Aquatic *Utricularia* are among some of the easiest carnivorous plants to grow. Place your plant/patch into a bowl of room-temperature water or a freshwater aquarium. Add a small amount of sphagnum peat moss to the water to maintain slightly acidic condition; use about one handful of premoistened peat moss per gallon of water. (In addition to providing a more suitable growing environment for your plants, it will also help deter the growth of algae.) If using a container, place in an area of indirect sunlight, or under a fluorescent light. If using an aquarium, the use of a fluorescent ballast hood is recommended. Many species of aquatic *Utricularia* may grow as free-floating mats, but anchoring your plant in a gravel substrate is necessary for some species to form flowers in the Spring. (This is optional.) If your plant becomes covered in algae, change the water, and rinse as much algae off the plant as you can before placing it back into its container. Note: do not be alarmed if your plant appears to be suffering when you first introduce it into its new growing conditions. As it acclimates to its new environment, new growth will resume, as well as emerge from areas of the plant which appeared to have browned.

**WATER:** A freshwater environment is mandatory. If using a water container other than an aquarium, please use water with <160ppm of total dissolved solids (TDS). A filtration system and air source (aquarium pump) is recommended to prevent stagnancy, but if it is unavailable, change the water when it begins to appear faintly yellow (due to stagnation), (faintly green due to algae) and/or if a film develops on the surface of the water. (TDS meters are available on our online store under **SEEDS AND SUPPLIES: OTHER.**) Adding a handful of peat moss to each gallon of water used is also helpful in reducing algae and providing a more comfortably acidic growing environment for your *Utricularia*.

**LIGHT:** If using natural light, then indirect sunlight on your container is recommended, as direct sunlight may lead to overheating and excessive growth of algae. For a more controlled environment, fluorescent lighting can be used as an alternative. A fluorescent ballast may be used, but for smaller containers, a desk lamp with a compact fluorescent tube (CFT) bulb should be fine. I recommend a “Daylight” spectrum bulb, rather than a “bright white” or “soft white.” Plants should receive at least 14 hours of light per day. We advise using an outlet timer. Keep the container 6”-12” away from the bulb, so that it receives enough light to thrive, but not so much heat that the leaves dry out.

**WHAT TO EXPECT:** Your aquatic *Utricularia* will grow additional stolons (stems) from existing growth points, and may actually branch out to form additional points. Look for the growth of aquatic bladders which develop on the stolons as well. If stolons break or snap, do not be concerned, as the point of fracture may become an additional growth point. If your plant is anchored, a flower stalk may emerge above the water’s surface in the spring. Some species undergo a winter dormancy (*U. purpurea*, *U. vulgaris*); expect those plants to recede in the winter, and form a ball-shaped structure at one end of the withering plant, called a turion. This is a starchy body, analogous to a plant bulb. When the temperatures warm, you’ll find that the turion begins to shrink/unravel and new growth will resume from parts of the plant that you might have otherwise thought was long dead.



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**TDS METER**