



Some experts will advise you to avoid handling your koi as much as possible. However, many koi keepers will either need to transport their koi or will need to inspect the fish for signs of illness or disease at some point in its life. The best times to examine koi are soon after they come out of torpor or right before entering it, which happens when water temperatures consistently remain at or below 50°F.

Use a viewing bowl partially filled with water to look at your koi up close. The bowl will float, but the edge should be high enough that the fish can't easily escape. To corral the koi and guide it into the viewing bowl, use a pan net (a shallow net resembling a frying pan) with slow and deliberate movements. Stay as quiet and calm as possible when approaching the desired koi with your net. You should always avoid chasing koi around your pond.

Once you secure the koi, tip the handle upward and raise the net to the surface. Do not lift the koi out of the water. Rest the net's rim on the edge of the viewing bowl. With your free hand, tip the bowl toward the net and gently guide the koi into it. Be sure to maintain enough water in the bowl to cover the koi completely.

## When Touching Koi:

- Remove all jewelry that might scratch or injure the fish.
- Wash your hands with dechlorinated water before touching the koi to protect its slime coat.
- Relax. Koi can sense if you are very nervous when trying to handle them. The more confident and calm you are, the easier the process will go.
- Pull the koi to the side of the bowl and use the hard surface to help you steady it.
- Be gentle. Hold the koi firmly but do not squeeze it too hard.
- If the koi is particularly jumpy, rotating it around slowly in the bowl can help to settle it.
- Make sure the koi's head is pointing toward your body.
- Nestle the nose of the koi in the palm of your hand. If you need to lift the fish, tuck its nose toward your armpit.
- Support the pectoral fins between your fingers. Do not force the fins against the fish's body.

It's best to handle koi only when absolutely necessary to reduce unnecessary stress and limit the opportunity for injury or infection. If you're performing a procedure, like scraping or applying topical treatments, having another person available can help the process go more quickly and smoothly.