

Coral Compatibility Guide – Soft Corals, Mushrooms, Zoanthids

Aquarists are accustomed to compatibility guides for fish and other marine animals but comprehensive guides on coral compatibility are lacking. Most corals use mechanisms to defend and compete for living space – prompting aquarist requests for compatibility guides focused on how coral behavior affects aquarium placement. Additionally, aquarists want to know the coral behavior to expect and the level of dominance of each coral; which coral will win the battle over space? This compatibility guide of commonly collected corals was compiled using literature review and aquarist experience. It should be viewed as a guide only – please let us know if you have additional information at info@nocoastaquatics.com and we will continue to update the guide.

TYPE OF CORAL		AGGRESSIVENESS OF CORAL			PREFERRED PARAMETERS	AQUARIUM PLACEMENT	
Family	Genus/Species	Dominant	Defensive	Passive	Light/Waterflow	Minimum Spacing	Where in Tank
Discosomatidae (Mushrooms)	Discosoma spp, Rhodactis spp, Actinodiscus spp. Mushrooms		X		Low/Medium Light Low Flow	6 inches	Mid/Bottom of Tank
Zoanthidae and Sphenopidae (Zoanthids and Polyps)	Zoanthus spp. and Palythoa spp. Zoanthids		X		Low/Medium Light Medium Flow	3 inches	Mid/Bottom of Tank
Alcyoniidae (Soft Coral - Leathers)	Alcyonium spp. Finger Leather			X	Medium Light Low Flow	3 inches	Bottom of Tank
	Klyxum spp. Colt Leather			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	3 inches	All Locations
	Sarcophyton spp. Toadstools		X Toxic Chemicals*		Medium Light Medium Flow	5-6 inches	All Locations
	Sinularia spp. Soft Finger Leather		X Toxic Chemicals*		Med/High Light Med/Strong Flow	5-6 inches	All Locations
Briareidae (Soft Coral)	Briareum spp. Star Polyps			X	Med/High Light Med/Strong Flow	4 inches (Grows fast)	Mid to Top of Tank
Clavulariidae (Soft Coral)	Clavularia spp. Palm Tree, Clove Polyps			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	4 inches	All Locations
Nephtheidae (Soft Coral)	Capnella spp. Kenya Tree Coral		X Toxic Chemicals*		Medium Light Medium Flow	4 inches	All Locations
	Nepthea spp. Green Tree Coral			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations
Tubiporidae (Soft Coral)	Tubipora spp. Pipe Organ Coral			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations
Xeniidae (Soft Coral)	Anthelia spp. Waving Hand Coral			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations
	Cespitularia spp. Blue Xenia Coral			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations
	Symphodium spp. Blue Symphodium			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations
	Xenia spp. Pulse Coral			X	Medium Light Medium Flow	2 inches	All Locations

***Toxic Chemicals** – Soft corals contain toxic chemicals released in the water to inhibit competing coral growth, damaging from a distance.