

Caring for Fruit Flies

The Silkworm Shop www.SilkwormShop.com

The Fruit Fly Shop www.FruitFlyShop.com

The Live Fish Food Shop www.LiveFishFoodShop.com

No Bugs Shelf Liner www.NoBugsShelfLiner.com

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Upon Arrival- Transferring the Flies – MUST BE DONE IMMEDIATELY: If the package has been handled roughly during shipment, the culture container may have food splashed up onto the sides. If so, scrape the food down with a sterile spatula and firmly tap the bottom of the container on a hard surface until the media is evenly distributed. If there are any puddles of water, pour them out, otherwise, the flies may drown in the water. Now, lift the lid on the container which holds the flies slightly on one side, and pour 50 - 75 flies into the culture container(s). **IMPORTANT: Secure the breathable insect lid(s) onto the culture container(s).** This is the lid that was on the container which the fruit flies were shipped in.

Some people may have trouble keeping the flies contained while transferring them. You may want to pour the flies into a round plastic container with high sides. As you're working with the flies, continually bang the side of the container with your hand so the flies don't crawl up the sides. You can pour the desired number of flies out by banging on the side as you tilt the container. This will keep the flies in a large mass as you're pouring them out. You can also place the container of flies into the fridge for a few minutes before working with them. This will slow them down and make them much easier to handle. Depending on temperature, it takes about 7 days for the *D. Melanogaster* and 14 days for the *D. Hydei* to begin producing hundreds upon hundreds of flies for up to a month.

NOTE: We include more flies than what is needed to start a culture—you will have plenty to use right away. Do not use all the flies that your order comes with to start a new culture. Using too many to start a new culture will result in an initial explosion of small new flies and a shorter culture lifespan. The extra flies must be used right away because they cannot survive long without food. Do not keep them in the shipping container they were sent to you in—they will not survive long in there. You can put them in the culture container for a day or so (before they begin to lay eggs in the media).

Culture Care

- Keep the Culture in temperatures of 65 °-80° F. Min/Max Temps - 50 °/90° F. Do not put the culture in direct sun.
- Don't let any Flying Flies get into the culture—you will end up with flying and non-flying flies...a real annoyance.
- It's important to maintain a reproductive population of flies. **Keep at least 50 flies in the culture at all times** and you'll ensure continuous reproduction. At the same time, **don't allow too many flies to develop.** Feed the fruit flies to your animals regularly.
- As the culture reaches mid-life (after about two weeks), the feeding medium may begin to dry out. The medium should look shinny and run very very slowly when the container is tilted to the side. If the medium appears dry and cracks appear on the sides, add a small amount of water to the culture by spraying two or three times with a mister. Continue to add a few mists each day until the medium regains its proper moisture. Do not add more than a few mists each day, whereas the results aren't immediately apparent and because adding too much water at one time may drown the flies or give you a soupy medium.

Controlling the Lifespan of Your Fruit Fly Culture: Optimum reproductive rate occurs at temps of around 80°. At around 60°, reproduction slows, allowing longer feeding time and longer use from a single culture. Obviously, the more flies you use, the higher you will want the reproductive rate to be.

Feeding to Your Pets: When it's feeding time for your pets, tap the container lightly on a countertop. This will cause the flies to fall to the bottom of the container so they won't escape when you take the lid off. As long as you continue to tap the container every few seconds, the flies won't be able to escape. Simply remove the lid, tilt the container over your animal's home and tap until the desired number of fruit flies fall out. If conditions are right and the medium has become too runny, do not tilt the culture on its side. Take the lid off the culture and place it upright into your animal's home or in a collection container until the desired number of flies crawl out.