6 questions to ask **before** buying fish online

1. Are you buying from a legitimate business?  
   You don’t get the same level of consumer protection if you buy from a member of the public as you do from a bona-fide business.

2. Does the seller have a Pet Shop Licence?  
   Anyone selling livestock commercially must be checked by their local authority to show they meet certain animal welfare standards.

3. Does the seller have the right paperwork to show what they’re selling is legal?  
   Some fish, plants & corals are illegal to own/sell in the UK & many need the right import paperwork which any seller should be able to provide.

4. Has the seller made sure you know what you’re doing with the fish you’re buying?  
   Beware sellers who don’t ask about your set-up. They clearly don’t have the fish’s welfare at heart.

5. Is the seller using an approved courier to transport your fish with a firm delivery arrangement?  
   Only approved couriers can transport fish with a firm date & delivery time in place. Never buy fish from people who use Royal Mail as their transport. It shows a complete lack of care for the fish.

6. Are they following OATA’s *Guide To The Responsible Distance Selling of Livestock*?  
   The Ormamental Aquatic Trade Association has issued in-depth guidance for responsible sellers to follow to protect the welfare of the fish in transport.

Buying fish online needs careful thought. You are buying a living creature. Its welfare is paramount.