

Important Health Notes

Pasting Up

As you move your baby chicks to their new home, check them for “pasting up”, a condition in which their droppings cake up and block their vent opening, preventing them from passing any more droppings. This problem will be pretty obvious, you won’t have to go poking around their insides to see it. The dried poo will be stuck to their outside, totally or partially covering their vent. This is a deadly condition if not dealt with immediately. We recommend you apply a warm, wet paper towel to their rears, then use your fingers or toothbrush to clear the blockage. In especially bad cases you may have to cut the fur in the affected area. You're chick may chirp loudly, but it must be taken care of or the chick will die. Dry the chick off with a blow dryer and immediately return it to the brooder box with the others. Keep checking the birds twice a day that presented with this problem, for it often returns throughout their first week or two.

Immediate Access to Water

Your new brood will need water right away. Watch them carefully once you’ve transferred them to their new home. If they aren’t finding the water, pick an especially active chick and gently put its beak into the water. This should be enough to teach them - once one chick’s drinking, the others are sure to follow. The same goes with the food, make sure they’re finding it. If not, show them. Resist the temptation to feed your chicks water with a syringe. This can cause death by drowning, even if you’re very careful about it. Just gently dip their beaks in water. If one is still not drinking, chances are it is struggling to stay alive and may not make it.

The Umbilical Cord

Some baby chicks will arrive to you with an intact, attached umbilical cord. It looks like a very thin black string attached to their rear. Don’t pull it! It’s not ‘pasting up”. Just leave it alone. It will fall off within a day or two. Pulling it can really injure them.

Ongoing Chick Care

Pay close attention to their behavior. If they’re crowded together directly under the heat source, they’re cold. Increase your lamp wattage or move brooder to a warmer room. If they’re around the edges of the brooder avoiding the heat and each other like the plague, they’re too hot! Decrease your lamp wattage and or add a temperature controller that turns off when the brooder reaches the desired temperature. Not getting this right can be the death of young poultry.

Heating Over Time

Don’t forget that your baby chicks need less and less heat as time goes by. However, this is just a guideline. Continue tuning into their behavioral cues as described above and you’ll know how to tweak their heat. Also, keep in mind that some of your chicks will develop faster than others, requiring less heat, while the “runty” ones will want to be closer to the heat lamp. Smaller breeds such as bantams, Silkies, Polish, etc. will also want the heat to be a couple degrees warmer than standard size breeds. Larger breeds such as Wyandottes and Jersey Giants will also want the heat to be a little cooler. Make sure your heating set-up gives each chick the choice of how much heat is comfortable to them.

Dealing With Kids & Chicks

If you’ve got kids or you’re planning on bringing kids over to see the chicks, set the boundaries up front. Chicks are irresistibly sweet and cheeky kids tend to harass them. Make sure you watch the chicks, if they show signs of distress, be firm and return them to their brooder. Also, if you have chicks that were recently pasted up, please instruct your kids to let them be. Over-handling can prevent a chick that’s “on the edge” from bouncing back.



AFTER SIX WEEKS:

1. Increase floor area to 3/4 square feet per bird.
2. Increase feeders to provide 2-1/2” to 3” of space per bird.
3. Increase waterers to one 5-gallon fount per 100 birds.
4. Make sure grit hopper is filled with proper sized grit. Check with your feed man.
5. Install roosts at the back of the brooder area. Allow four inches per bird with roost poles six inches apart.
6. Open windows in day-time. Leave only partly open at night.
7. Prevent water puddles around founts. Place founts on low wire platforms.
8. Birds can range outside on warm, sunny days, but only if clean range is available.

10 Fun Facts About Chicken Eggs

1. Hens are born with only so many eggs in their system. They will not lay eggs until they die. They will lay until they run out.
2. If the eggs are not collected in a timely manner, the mama hen will eat her eggs. She will like it too, and she will continue to eat her eggs.
3. Chicken eggs can be frozen up to 1 year. Whip eggs together lightly, add a pinch of salt and put it in a freezer bag
4. Brown eggs are larger than white eggs or easter eggs.
5. Studies have shown eating an egg a day makes you smarter.
6. An old egg will float up in a pot of boiling water. Fresher eggs will remain at the bottom of the heated pot.
7. The United States will produce about 75 billion eggs a year, that is about 10% of the world’s supply.
8. Hens can lay eggs without a hard shell. These eggs did not develop correctly and are thrown out.
9. Hens need roughly 1/3 of a pound of feed, 10 ounces of water, 14-16 hours of sunlight, and 24 hours to produce just one chicken egg.
10. If a hen removes the egg from the nesting box, it is more than likely she is aware of an issue that egg may have.

Chick Care Guide

Raising chicks can be a very exciting and rewarding experience. It can also be a challenging task caring for them properly. So you get the most out of raising your own poultry, we have provided some helpful information to keep your birds healthy.



Before Your Chicks Arrive:

Your first consideration will be where to set up their brooder. The area should be kept clean, dry, draft free, and away from any eating areas. Have your brooder, feeders, waterers, feed and proper heat source up and ready to go. Here is a list of supplies you'll need upon your chicks arrival:

- * Brooder Box
- * Feeder
- * Waterer
- * Chick Starter Feed
- * Heat Lamp
- * Heat Bulb 125 to 250 Watt
- * Thermometer
- * Pine Shavings
- * Vitamins & Electrolytes
- * Chick Warmer



Set up your brooder and get it to temperature before your birds arrive so the area is evenly warm before they come.

After Your Chicks Arrive:

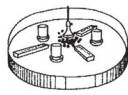
A brooder with a grippable surface is best for proper leg development. The grippable surface helps chicks learn to walk and aids in preventing splayed legs, slipped tendons and other leg deformities. Pine shavings can also be used for bedding in the brooder. This will help absorb droppings and keep the chicks clean and the area smelling fresh. Bedding should be replaced about every 3-4 days depending on how quickly it is soiled. Older chicks will need their bedding replaced more often.

HEAT/TEMPERATURE:

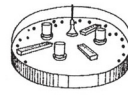
You will need a heat lamp and heat bulb to keep your chicks warm. Usually a 125-250 watt lamp per 25 birds is required to start with. Red bulbs are preferable as they will cause less pecking. Initially the temperature should be 90-95 degrees from the center section of the brooder (about 4-6 inches of the center). As your chicks grow, you will need to lower your temperature by 5 degrees each week until 70 degrees is reached. At this point, the heat can be removed unless the temperature outside of the brooder area is still quite cold. The chicks are the best indicators of whether or not you are providing them with adequate heat. If they are all huddled together under the lamp, you need to increase the heat in the brooder. Also, if they scatter to the edges of the brooder, it's too hot. Ideally your chicks should be feeding and drinking and generally scattered about the brooder area.

Temperature Guide by Week

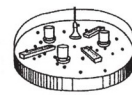
0-1 week	90-95*	3-4 weeks	75-80*
1-2 weeks	85-90*	4-5 weeks	70-75*
2-3 weeks	80-85*	5-6 weeks	70*



TOO COOL



TOO HOT



JUST RIGHT

FOOD/WATER:

Chicks MUST be provided with feed and water as soon as you receive them. To start a chick, dip the chicks beak in their water and feed to initiate them to where their food and water sources are. As you move your chicks outside, you will need an ample number of containers to accommodate the size of your flock. Provide one 24 inch feeder and one gallon chick fountain for each twenty-five chicks. Keep your feeders and waterers close to the heat source. Chicks will not stray far from the heat to eat and drink. Provide warm water to chicks their first week. Change your water daily and keep your feeders clean. This will keep your chicks healthy. Waterers should "grow" with your birds. As the chicks grow, their consumption increases and you will need to step up on the size of the waterer. Newborn (0-2 weeks old) chicks will need a small water base of some type to keep them from drowning or getting wet. Wet chicks often die from getting too cold. Adding vitamins and electrolytes to the chick's water their first week or two will help them get off to a better start and help prevent pasting up.

FEED:

The same basics hold true for your feeders. The bigger the chicks get, the larger feeder you will need. Provide day old chicks, ducks and geese with CHICK STARTER. Turkeys and Game birds require a higher protein feed such as Turkey or Game Bird Starter. NEVER FEED SCRATCH TO CHICKS!

As your chicks grow, provide them with more space. This will reduce cannibalism, provide an area for them to exercise, and reduce the chance of disease.

Often times people get a few chicks for their children to enjoy. Be advised that over-handling them can lead to a decrease in your chick population. Remember to keep them warm, dry, fed and watered and before you know it, you'll be the recipient of fresh eggs.