

Chicken Care Guide

Chickens make great pets and can be very social animals. They will usually bond easily with you once they know you are the one who provides their food.

The average lifespan of a chicken is 8-10 years; therefore you will need to be committed to their regular daily care and attention. They will depend on you to provide food, water, medical care and shelter, but in return they'll provide you with entertainment, affection and even a supply of home-grown eggs!

Environment and Housing



All chickens need free-range time out of their coop and will quickly learn to return to their nests in the evening. They love to roll around in the dust, so ensure that you always provide a dust/dirt bath for them.

Coops should always include a secure place to roost and should be secure from predators. Remember that even the friendly family cat or dog can be tempted by chickens, so it's a good idea to keep other pets well-supervised, particularly when the chickens are new.

Water

Chickens need a lot of water – laying hens drink twice as much as non-laying hens, with adult chickens requiring around 500mL each per day. This will increase even further in warm weather.

Feeding

Chickens require different feed depending on their life stage. Young chicks should be fed a Chicken Starter as this contains high levels of protein, essential for this period of fast growth. Pullets (6 weeks to 16-20 weeks) should be fed Pullet Grower. This contains less protein, as older chickens don't require as much, however it has more fibre.

Hens that are nearing egg laying stage (16-20 weeks) should be on Layer Feed. This contains high levels of calcium which helps with eggshell production for firm, hard eggs. This feed should not be given to chickens under 16 weeks as it can cause kidney damage.

Care

Lice and mites can be quite common in chickens. It is important to clean chicken coops with a non-toxic, chicken-friendly product, such as Poultry Shield, to kill mites and their eggs.

For a chicken to truly digest their food, they must absorb the nutrients as part of the digestion process. Grit slows down the process, allowing food to stay in the digestive system long enough to allow for nutrient uptake, while also serving a purpose similar to fibre in moving everything through.