

How to Care for Chicks | Your Step-by-Step Guide

If the chicks are taken out of the machine or from their mother, all their needs must be taken care of during their upbringing.

The following 8 things must be taken care of in the room where the brood or chicks are kept.

1: Temperature



Before the chicks arrive, the brooder bulbs should be turned on to even out the temperature (which can be done by increasing or decreasing the number of bulbs).

A 4-inch layer of wood shavings should be placed on the floor. The room temperature for a day-old chick should be about 90 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit.

Then, it should be reduced by 5 degrees Fahrenheit each week. Meanwhile, the room temperature should not fall below 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

The chicks should be protected from the cold at all costs. Chicks huddle together because of the cold. So that their nests can get warm. But this moisture can cause respiratory diseases.

2: Health Issues



Pasty butt (poop stuck to feathers) kills chicks fast. Check vents daily, gently wipe with warm water if clogged.

Vaccinate the chicks or ask your hatchery if they've had Marek's disease or Newcastle vaccines.

Healthy chicks gain 1.5–2 ounces weekly. Track growth to spot any issues. Add 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar per gallon of water weekly to boost gut health.

Essentials first aid care: Vetericyn spray for wound care, Blu-Kote for anti-pecking deterrent, and use triple antibiotic ointment for no pain relievers.

3: Ventilation



For both chicks and hens, the ventilation system in the room protects them from respiratory diseases.

The brood should be placed in such a way that fresh air can easily pass through them so that the humidity of the room produced by the chicks is removed.

But proper protection from strong winds should also be provided. Small chicks require one square foot of air per brooder.

Avoid burning coal or kerosene in the room so that carbon dioxide is not produced, which is very harmful to the chicks.

If there is a lot of air movement in the room, it is necessary to use heaters, etc. to keep its temperature uniform.

4: Space Provision



A brooder is their first home, ensuring they are a warm, draft-free space for chicks. Use a plastic tub, cardboard box, or stock tank.

Line the floor with paper towels for the first 3-4 days (easy cleanup and prevents slipping), then switch to pine shavings (never cedar, which causes respiratory issues).

One brooder is sufficient for brooding 250 to 500 chicks one day old. During brooding, half a square foot of floor space is provided per chick.

After brooding and initial growth, 1 square foot of space should be provided for brooder chicks and 2 square feet for egg-laying chickens.

Chicks should not be kept in large groups at all. Because in this way their growth slows down.

5: Bedding or Litter



The thickness of the surface of the litter placed on the floor during brooding should be 3 to 4 inches. In addition to absorbing moisture in the litter, it should be tasteless and baby.

The litter should be changed every time the chicks arrive. The nails should be removed immediately.

In this way, several dangerous diseases such as bloody dysentery and respiratory diseases, colds, and flu can occur.

Before laying a new litter, wash the floor of the room thoroughly with phenyl or any disinfectant one day.

Shake the litter up and down at least three times a week so that the lower or damp litter dries quickly due to exposure to air. Only softwood shavings or shavings should be used as litter.

6: Feeding



One theory is that the chicks should not be fed for the first 36 hours. So that the yolk in their stomachs can be digested.

However, if the chicks arrive at the farm by train, ship, or any other means, then they should be fed immediately. Initially, the chicks cannot eat grains from the food bowls.

So spread a little food on cardboard or paper and put it down so that they can chew from there.

Fresh and clean water should be available in the chicks' bowls at all times. Use a shallow dish with marbles to prevent drowning.

The water should be changed twice in winter and at least three to four times in summer. So that it does not get hot or cold quickly depending on the weather.

Water bowls should also be placed in order with the food bowls. The water bowls should be 3 inches above the ground level.

So that the chicks do not get into it and spoil the water. The bowls should be cleaned thoroughly in the morning and evening. So that dirt etc. do not accumulate in them.

Chicks need starter feed with 18-20% protein for muscle growth. Choose crumbles for easy eating.

Use medicated feed if your chicks aren't vaccinated against coccidiosis. Add grit (tiny stones) once they eat treats, it helps in digestion.

7: Protect From Predators and Stress



Chicks are snack-sized to cats, dogs, and even rats. Secure the brooder with ½-inch wire mesh.

Also, avoid loud noises, stress weakens the chick's immune system. And keep your kids supervised, to gentle handling only because squeezing can injure organs.

8: Socialize Them



Start bonding early, and spend 10 minutes daily talking to chicks. Hand-feed treats like mealworms after week 1. Let them nap in your hands to build trust.

Introduce new objects (perches, mirrors) to spark curiosity and keep them entertained, active and healthy.

Introduce dust baths also (a shallow dish with dirt/sand) at 3 weeks for natural grooming.

Some Useful Tips For The Secret of Your Chicks Success

Here are some useful tips that contain the secret of success:

- No one should be allowed to enter the chicken coop except the servant who pours water on the chickens. Because in this way, every visitor can bring disease germs with them and spread the disease.

- Before entering the chicken coop, clothes should be changed. And feet should be dipped in fennel outside the door and then enter.
 - Nutrition is the backbone of chick development. Start with a high-quality starter feed containing 18-20% protein. This ensures proper muscle and feather growth.
 - Vaccinate regularly to protect against diseases.
 - When your chicks are fully feathered (around 6 weeks), it's time to introduce them to the outdoors. Do this gradually to avoid shock.
 - Make the chicken coop a peaceful environment. And do not make any noise or noise near it as much as possible.
 - Place a thermometer 3 inches above the ground near the brooder. So that the temperature of the brooder can be determined.
 - The utensils of one chicken coop should not be used in another chicken coop or they should be washed with disinfectants such as Dettol and dried thoroughly.
 - Chickens or chicks of the same age should be kept in each room.
 - To dispose of dead chicks or hens, make a pit outside the boundaries of the chicken coop. After burying the dead chicks, put a thick layer of lime on top of it.
 - If any chick or hen falls sick, separate them immediately. To find out the disease, contact the Poultry Research Institute, Rawalpindi, or its sub-offices.
 - Chicks are curious and active by nature. Stimulate their instincts to promote healthy development.
 - Chicks are vulnerable to diseases, so vigilance is key. Watch for signs of illness like lethargy, sneezing, or pasty butt (a common condition where droppings block the vent).
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When to Move Them Outdoors



Wait until they're fully feathered (6–8 weeks).

Transition gradually:

Let them explore outdoors for 1–2 hours daily (supervised). And then slowly increase the outdoor time as they grow.

Transition to larger housing by week 6, they'll double in size every 7 days. Ensure their coop has 1 sq ft per chick initially, expanding as they grow.

At night time, lock them in a predator-proof coop to hide from predators.

Let's cut to the chase, **raising chicks isn't luck, it's actionable science**. You hold the power to turn fragile fluffballs into thriving chickens.

Nail the basics: keep that brooder toasty, stuff them with a 20% protein starter feed, and hunt for a pasty butt like it's your nemesis.

Predators? Outsmart them.

Stress? Crush it.

Every decision you make, right now, echoes in their future.

The USDA confirms it: 90% of chick deaths are avoidable.

So own those daily weigh-ins, perfect the heat lamp dance, and don't blink when challenges hit.

Let's go.