

# Lifespan of Backyard Chickens, Wild Chickens & Farm Chickens

When raising and keeping chickens, we always have special and loved feathered friends for whom we want to ensure a long and happy life.

They **become like family**; we often find ourselves curious about their lifespan and eager to know how many years they will live.

The lifespan of backyard, farm, and wild chickens can vary from weeks to years; A backyard chicken can live longer than a wild or farm chicken.

This article highlights the lifespans of different chicken breeds, which is essential for choosing the right breed for your backyard or flock.

Let's get started.

## Lifespan of Backyard Chickens

The lifespan of chickens **depends on several factors**, and genetics plays a vital role. Some chicken breeds are naturally able to live longer than others.

Further, the **quality of care** you provide your chickens, including nutrition, housing conditions, environment, and healthcare, can significantly impact their lifespan.

Other reasons are stress levels, harsh conditions, and exposure to predators. Climate change also contributes to determining how long a chicken lives.

By providing them with a safe and comfortable environment, proper nutrition, and regular veterinary care, you can ensure that your feathered friends live for **5 to 10 years or more**.

## Lifespan of Hybrid Chickens

Hybrid chickens result from **crossing two or more breeds** for desired characteristics and qualities in one chicken.

Hybrid chickens are **more susceptible to reproductive issues** because they're bred for high egg production at the cost of their health.

They are fast-growing chickens bred for high production rates. The toll of fast growth and high production demands a lot from these chickens, reducing their lifespan.

Hybrid chickens have the **shortest lifespan of approximately 2-7 years**, but they also live longer or shorter than that.

## Lifespan of Backyard Chickens in Captivity

Backyard chickens and chickens in captivity usually refer to the **same thing**. They are domesticated chickens kept by people for purposes like egg/meat production, pest control, or as pets.

The lifespan of backyard **chickens in captivity ranges from 5 to 10 years** with proper and balanced care.

## Lifespan of Backyard Chickens in the Wild

The lifespan of backyard chickens in the wild is about how long chickens would survive if they survived **without human care** and relied solely on their own.

If they live in the wild without people's care, their **lifespan is shorter** than in captivity or a backyard.

As in the wild, they would **face many problems** like predator attacks, diseases, and environmental hazards, which could reduce their lifespan.

The lifespan of backyard chickens in the wild is significantly shorter than that of backyard or captive chickens; **wild chickens survive for around 3–7 years or less**.

## Lifespan of Chickens in Farms

Chickens raised on farms typically have a **lifespan of weeks to years**, as they are raised solely for egg and meat production.

They provide food, shelter, and veterinary care to ensure their health and well-being, and once they reach maturity, **they are harvested for meat**.

On the other hand, chickens raised for **egg production are kept longer** than the meat ones.

Chickens raised for meat production can live 6–8 weeks, and those raised for egg production are kept for 1—2 years.

## How long do Chickens Live as Pets?

As pets, chickens receive better care than other chickens, so their **lifespan is extended**.

However, factors like breed, climate, and environmental conditions can positively or negatively affect the lifespan of a pet chicken.

Pet chickens, on average, live **about 10 years**; some have been recorded as living into their **teens or even twenties** with proper care and attention.

## How Long Do Chickens Live on Average?

On average, chickens live 5–10 years and have a balanced diet, a safe environment, and overall health care.

The **lifespan of backyard chickens** is also 5–10 years with proper care, a safe environment, and proper attention.

**Farm chickens** raised for meat live 6–8 weeks, while one kept for egg production can live 1–2 years, and **wild chickens** generally live between 3 and 7 years, as they face harsh conditions.

Lifespan also depends on various factors such as breed, climate, environmental conditions, and overall health.

## Chickens that Have Longer Lifespans

- **Heritage Chickens**

Heritage breeds must originate from parent and grandparent stock officially recognized by the American Poultry Association before the mid-20th century.

All new and **modern chicken breeds have been created from heritage breeds**. Some common heritage breeds are Australorps and Rhode Island Reds.

Heritage chicken breeds are **slow-growth birds**, hardy, good foragers, and perfect for backyard conditions.

They also have longer lifespans than most other chickens breed; they can **live for 6-12 years**.

- **Dual-purpose Chickens**

Dual-purpose chicken breeds can be heritage or hybrid and are valued for **meat and egg** production.

Dual-purpose breed chickens usually grow and mature more gradually compared to production hybrid breeds.

The average lifespan of a dual-purpose chicken is usually **around 6 to 8 years**, which is a good lifespan.

Examples of dual-purpose hybrid chicken breeds include Black Stars, Australorps, and Sapphire Gems.

- **Landrace chickens**

Landrace chickens are domestic breeds adapted to specific regions with unique traits like **disease resistance and foraging skills**.

Landrace chicken breeds also have the longest natural lifespan; they can **live over 10 years** with proper care.

Examples of landrace chicken breeds include Icelandic chickens, Hedemoras, Swedish Black Hens, and Swedish Flower Hens.

**Long Lifespans Chickens**

Name	Lifespan
Old English Game Fowl Chickens	15 years or more
Plymouth Rock	10—12 years
Wyandotte Chickens	6—12 years
Orpington Chickens	8—10 years
Cochin Chickens	8—10 years
Jersey Giants	7—10 years
Australorp	6—10 years
Silkie Chickens	8—9 years
Easter Eggers Chickens	5—8 years
Rhode Island Red Chickens	5—8 years
Bantam Chickens	4—8 years
Cornish Cross	5—8 years

## Chickens that Have Shorter Lifespans

- **Hybrid Chickens**

Hybrid chickens **grow fast and are bred for high productivity**. However, the fast growth rate and high production can wear down a hen's body, shortening her natural lifespan.

Due to increased strain on their bodies, hybrid chicken breeds typically have a **3-5 year lifespan**, the shortest among domestic poultry.

Examples of hybrid chicken breeds include Isa Brown and Cornish Rocks.

## Short Lifespan Chickens

Name	Lifespan
White Broilers	5—7 years (harvested at 5—7 weeks)
Isa Browns	2—3 years
Golden Comets	4—5 years
Leghorn	4—6 years

## Conclusion

In conclusion, a backyard chicken or chicken in captivity can live for 5 to 10 years with proper care, a balanced diet, and a comfortable environment.

Genes and breed are two critical factors that are crucial to the chicken's lifespan and productivity.

Heritage chickens, dual-purpose breeds, and landrace chickens generally have longer lifespans than hybrid chickens.

Have you ever raised the longest-living chicken? Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts and concerns with us. We are here to assist you.