



Brooding Chicks

The normal brooding period, when heat is required, is from the time chicks hatch until they are about 6 weeks old.



Supplies

- ❑ Brooder: Enclosed, appropriately sized, draft-free container that will keep chicks safe
- ❑ Heat plate or heat source
- ❑ Feeder
- ❑ Chick Waterer (shallow water access)
- ❑ High-Quality Medicated Chick Starter Feed on 0 to 21 days; crumbles. Grower feed from 22 to 49 days
- ❑ Electrolytes
- ❑ Bedding (paper, pine, etc.)

Using a Heat Plate

- ❑ Heat plates can be adjusted to fit the height of the chick.
- ❑ If chicks are huddled close together, this indicates that the chicks are cold and the heat plate should be lowered.
- ❑ If chicks are spread far apart, raise the heat plate.
- ❑ As chicks mature and their feathers begin to come in, less heat is needed.

Brooder

(a safe place for chicks until they are big enough to be moved to the coop)

- ❑ Assemble before getting chicks.
- ❑ Place a layer of bedding.
 - Container should have at least 1 to 2 sq ft of floor space per chick and 12" sides to keep the chicks from escaping.
 - A layer of newspaper or cardboard can be used to help maintain a cleaner environment.
- ❑ Heat plate: Adjust the height so chicks can fit under it comfortably.
 - Brooder temp set at 95 degrees F in cold weather and 90 degrees in hot weather; room temperature should range from 65-75 degrees.
 - In general, drop the temperature 5 degrees each week until the chicks are 5 weeks old; then maintain the temperature at 70 degrees.
- ❑ Water
 - Place on a level surface.
 - Electrolytes can be added to water to help ease the stress of moving and provide a boost to their immune system.
- ❑ Fill the feeder with a chick starter feed.

Chick Care

- ❑ Chicks should be checked on at least twice a day for the first two weeks.
- ❑ Clean the brooder and replace pine shavings at least once a week.
 - Chicks need a clean environment to prevent illness.
- ❑ Make sure water is fresh and clean.
 - Placing the waterer on a small block may help keep the water clean.
- ❑ Wash your hands before and after cleaning the brooder or handling chicks to prevent the transfer of disease.
- ❑ Chicks should be fed the chick starter for the first 18 weeks and then transitioned to a layer feed which is higher in calcium to support egg growth.
- ❑ When chicks are fully feathered (around 8 weeks) they can be moved to a coop.
 - Each chick will need 3 sq ft in the coop and 8 sq ft in the run.