

CHICK CARE

It is easy to rear baby chicks. They need 4 things:

1. Heat

Baby chicks cannot regulate their own body temperature. If you are putting them under a broody hen she will take care of this for them. However, if you are rearing them with a heat lamp you will need to act as their Mum until they get their feathers.

For the first week aim to keep chicks inside in a large cardboard box/fish tank with a heat lamp safely attached to one side/corner. Ideally the temp should be 32-34°C for the first week and then reduced by approximately 3/5°C each week until the brooder temperature is the same as the ambient temperature. Ensure that chicks have the option to get closer to the heat source if they feel cold or get away from the lamp if they feel too hot. As the chicks grow older the aim is to gradually let them spend more & more time outside (depending on the weather) and just bring them in at night until finally they are outside permanently (usually at around 6 weeks depending on the breed).



2. Food

For the first 8 weeks chicks require Chick Starter crumbles. The following 8 weeks they require a slightly larger Grower crumble. From 16 weeks onwards they are considered POL ("point of lay") and can eat normal Layer pellets/Scratch mix etc. Your local rural store or pet store will stock all of these.

3. Water

Chicks need constant access to clean, fresh drinking water every day. Ensure that the water container you use is not too deep & that chicks can easily get out of it if they venture in.

4. Protection & TLC

Chicks need to be kept in a clean, dry, well-ventilated space where they have protection from wind/draughts, rain, extreme heat and predators (cats, dogs, foxes & birds swooping from above).