

FAQs
Backyard Egg Production

1. How long until I have eggs? Some hens will start laying at about 20 weeks. I have had other chickens that don't lay until 10 or 11 months.
2. Do I need a rooster to have eggs? No, only to have baby chicks.
3. How often do chickens lay an egg? About every 36 hours, depending on the breed.
4. Why do chickens lay different colored eggs? Different breeds lay different colored eggs. Light brown, deep chocolate brown, white, off white, pinkish and even green and blue. Some also lay speckled eggs.
5. Are brown eggs healthier than white eggs? No, the color of the egg has no bearing on the how healthy it is. How chickens are fed and kept are what matters.
6. Will the eggs my chickens lay taste better than store bought? Yes. The chickens in our backyard will lay eggs unlike any you've tried before. A good rule of thumb: The more orange the egg yolk the more healthy and better tasting the egg is.
7. Will I save money by having chickens? No. If you sell your extra eggs you may break even. There are a lot of reasons to have your own chickens but saving money is not one of them.
8. Can chickens fly? Sort of. The small breeds can fly about 25 feet. Heavier breeds have much more limited flight.
9. Do chickens really "come home to roost"? Yes. Chickens will come back to the same place to sleep every night. They will roam during the day and will put themselves to bed when the sun goes down.
10. How noisy are chickens? Roosters are very noisy and, contrary to popular opinion, they don't just crow in the morning. They crow off and on all day long. Hens are quieter until they lay an egg or are threatened.
11. Do you have to give chickens a bath? No. Chickens take dust baths to keep them clean and free of pests.
12. How long do chickens live? It's common to hear of a pet chicken living 8 to 10 years. Once in a while you hear reports of 15 years or more but it is rare.
13. What are free range chickens? Chickens that have access to an environment outside a chicken house or sheltered area.

14. What are blood spots? Although rare in packaged eggs, blood spots can sometimes be found when an egg is cracked. These spots are caused by the rupture of a blood vessel during the formation of the egg and are usually on the outside edge of the yolk. They do not indicate that the egg is fertile.

Another imperfection that can be found in an egg is a meat spot. Meat spots are usually found in the white of the egg. Meat spots are pieces of the oviduct of the chicken that have become dislodged during the formation of the egg and have been deposited in the white. Eggs with either of these spots are safe to consume.

15. How should I store my eggs? Eggs should be stored in a carton. This is because eggshells have thousands of tiny pores to allow gases to move in and out of the egg. Eggs not stored in the carton can pick up odors from other items in the refrigerator.

16. Why is the white of the egg sometimes cloudy? It is a gas that has not had time to escape yet and indicate that the egg is very fresh.

17. Why are fresh eggs hard to peel? The fresher the egg that is boiled, the harder it will be to peel. As the egg gets older, the air pocket inside grows, pulling the white's membrane away from the shell.