

## **If You Build it, They will Come... (or How Much Space Does a Chicken Need?)**

<http://www.citygirlfarming.com/Chickens/HowMuchSpaceDoesAChickenTake.html>

### **HOW BIG should you build your chicken coop?**

Here's a simple formula to keep in mind:

One chicken needs approximately 3-4 square feet of space in the hen house. This means, if you plan on raising 5 chickens, your chicken coop should be 15-20 square feet.

PLUS, your chickens need room outside for some fresh air and room to roam (safely). Each chicken needs approximately 4 square feet of room in the chicken run. So, if you're still planning on those 5 chickens, you will need an additional 20 square feet of fenced area for them to be in.

### **How much food should you feed your chickens?**

A safe approximation is this: One chicken will need about 1/2 cup of food per day. They will also need 1.5-2.5 cups of water per day. For our 5 chicken example, this means 2.5-3 cups of food per day, and 10 cups of water.

But that's not all. Your chickens will also need grit to help them digest their food. And calcium for their health and the health of the eggs they're laying. And cracked corn, for a treat (okay, they don't really need the corn, but they think they do!).

### **How many eggs will your chickens lay?**

That all depends...on the age of your chicken (they won't lay eggs until they're 5-6 months old and as they get older, their egg production slows down - the first two years of production are the best), the breed of your chicken (some breeds lay more than others), the health of your chicken (healthy, happy chickens do better), the time of year (the lighter the better for egg laying - a chicken needs 14 hours of daylight for egg laying), etc....

BUT, having said all of that, under good conditions, you can reasonably expect a active, healthy, not-too-old chicken to lay 3-7 eggs per week (I only have one chicken out of 8 that lays 6-7 days a week, the others lay less).

### **The super amazing mathematical formulation ( that is NOT pure science):**

One chicken

+ 4 square feet of hen house

+ 4 square feet of chicken run

+ 1/2 Cup Food

+ 2 Cups water

+ Sunshine, happiness and health

+ a sprinkling of chicken scratch, calcium, corn and misc scraps and bugs and stuff

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= 1 egg per day or so

OR

5 chickens

+ 20 square feet of hen house (or larger)

+ 20 square feet of chicken run (or larger)

+ 21 cups food

+ 70 cups water

+sunshine, happiness and health

+ a sprinkling of chicken scratch, calcium, corn and misc scraps and bugs and stuff

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=2-3 dozen eggs per week