



Baby Chicks at a Glance

Difficulty of care: **Beginner to moderate**

Average lifespan: **7+ years**

Average adult size: **Varies by breed**

Diet: **Omnivorous**

Minimum habitat size: **Brooder space (½ sq ft per chick, increasing with age)**

Temperature: **93–95 F (week 1), decreasing weekly to 65–70 F**



Fun fact ↪ Baby chicks cannot regulate their body temperature.

Enclosure Setup & Maintenance

- Baby chicks need a warm, draft-free brooder for the first few weeks of life. The brooder should be at least 2 feet high with good ventilation and enough space for each chick. Start with about ½ square foot per chick, increasing as they grow.
- Line the brooder with 3–4 inches of bedding such as pine shavings, paper litter, or aspen shavings. Add simple enrichment like perches and small toys. Maintain proper heat, starting at 93–95 F during the first week, then lowering the temperature by 5 F each week until it reaches 65–70 F.
- Provide 8 hours of light daily at first, gradually increasing to 14–16 hours. Spot-clean the brooder daily and replace bedding often. Perform a full cleaning and disinfection regularly to maintain a healthy environment.

Supply Checklist

- Incubator (if hatching eggs)
- Brooder with heat source
- Bedding
- Thermometer
- Chick feeder and waterer
- Starter feed and chick grit
- Perches and toys
- Cleaning supplies



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Health

Healthy chicks are active, social, and have clean eyes, nostrils, and feet.

- **Signs of illness:** Discharge, breathing issues, or loss of appetite
- **Injuries:** Limping, wing problems, or beak damage
- **Behavior changes:** Low energy or reduced activity

Early vet care and proper brooder conditions help chicks grow into healthy adult chickens.

Fun fact ↪ Many chicken breeds differ in size, appearance, and temperament.

Diet

Baby chicks should always have access to clean, fresh water using a chick-safe waterer to prevent drowning. They should be fed a high-quality commercial starter feed daily, which provides the protein, vitamins, and fat they need for growth. Food and water should be available at all times.

Starter feed is appropriate for the first 4–8 weeks, after which chicks can transition to a grower feed. Adding small amounts of chick grit helps them properly digest their food.

Chicks can also have small amounts of fruits, vegetables, and protein-rich treats like insects, but these should make up no more than 5% of their diet. All treats should be cut into small, manageable pieces.

Fun fact ↪ They are very social and should be raised in groups.

