

THE CARE OF BABY CHICKS

Poultry Need: Feed, Water, Heat, Light & Space.

FEED: Use a [commercial chick starter](#) for the first 8 weeks.

WATER: Have a [1 gallon chick waterer](#) for each 50 birds. DIP THE BEAK OF THE CHICK IN THE WATER BEFORE YOU TURN IT LOOSE. For the first 2 days add 3 tablespoons of table sugar to each quart of water for extra energy. Your birds will be thirsty when you get them. A taste of water right away helps them to find more water soon. Most baby bird loss is caused because the bird doesn't start to eat or drink.

HEAT: The temperature where the birds are should be 90 to 95 degrees for the first week. Reduce the temperature 5 degrees per week until you get to 70 degrees. Then they shouldn't need any more heat. A good source of heat is a [250 watt bulb](#). (Red bulbs are better than white. They cause less picking.)

LIGHT: If you use a heat bulb, this will also serve as the light you need. Otherwise, be sure to give your birds light. Use a 75 watt bulb on dark days. Have a small light for night - 15 watts or similar - to keep them from piling.

SPACE: Try to provide 1/2 square foot per bird at the start.

OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS

LITTER: Wood shavings, rice hulls, or ground cobs make good litter. Do not use cedar chips sawdust, or treated wood chips. Sand, straw, or dirt will also work but are not as good as the others. Put the litter all over the floor at least 1 inch thick. Keep it covered for the first day with newspapers to keep the chicks from eating the litter instead of the feed

GRIT: Starting the 3rd day sprinkle [baby grit on the feed](#) daily as if you were salting your food.

PICKING: Baby birds will often pick each other if they are too hot, too crowded, or without fresh air. Occasionally bright light also causes them to pick. To stop it try putting in fresh green grass clippings several times a day and darken the room.