



Raising Chickens

From chicken pooh to BLACK GOLD

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WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



Master Gardener Program

Types of Chickens



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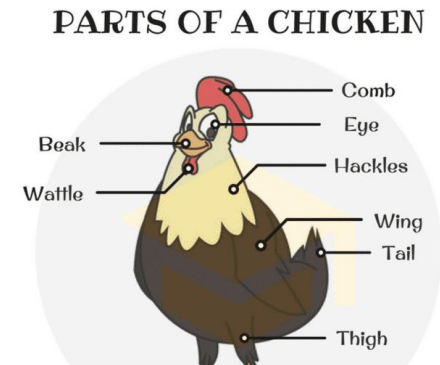
Types continue

- There are over 100+ types of chickens from Rhode Island Reds to Sussex and more
- They come in all sizes and colors!



How to tell the difference between male and female birds

- Size of their wattle (males have larger wattles)
- Size of the spurs (males have larger spurs)
- Hackles (shapes for males and females are different)
- Cape feathers (males have pointed ends and females are rounded)



Care

- Baby Chicks
 - Unsexed chicks are called straight run. This means they can be either male or female. They have not been checked.
 - Female baby chicks are called pullets and male chicks are called cockerels
 - Baby chicks can go to their forever homes after they dry which takes about 24 hours.
 - Baby chicks are kept in a Brooder and must have food, water and a heat lamp. Temperatures change week to week. They start at day one at 95 degrees F.

Care continued

- Brooder is lined with pine wood chips and should be changed daily until birds are 5/6 weeks old.



Using bedding and poultry litter as compost



Raking out your Coop for composting

Rake out coop and take all materials to your composting area.

Your material should be 3 parts litter/wood chips to 1 part chicken manure



Composting

- Most people just use dirt for the bottom of their coops and rake the coop out as needed.
- For composting it is suggested you use either poultry litter or pine shavings but leaves will also work (bedding).
 - Line coop not run with 6'' – 8'' of litter or bedding.
 - Litter should be moist not too wet. You should be able to pick it up and make a ball, but then break the ball up easily.
 - You only need to change your coop a few times a year but some like to change their coops daily.

Composting continued

- After loading up your bin you want to make sure you have a good combination of yard clippings, table scraps (minus meat), and fruits and vegetables.
- Mix your compost pile with all materials and make sure it has enough water.
- Pile will heat naturally to 140F – 160F
- WSU recommend letting your compost cure for 45-60 day. Compost is ready when soil is dark, crumbly and has a sweet smell to it.

Composting continued

- Compost color should be brownish. When this color appears your compost will be higher in carbon content.
- When compost is ready it will not smell bad nor will it smell like the chicken waste.



Food for thought

- What came first the chicken or the egg?
- How many different color eggs are there?



Extras!

