

# A Completed Guide to Raising Backyard Chickens



*Tips and tricks for raising healthy chickens*

## Introduction

Love pets?

If yes, then why not raise chickens and that too in your own backyard?!

The journey is exciting yet rewarding. You'll not only enjoy raising your backyard chickens in the best way possible, you'll be getting fresh and tasty eggs from them.

Looking for organically produced chicken for your dinner? The produce is right in your backyard: the homegrown chickens!

Wondering how to raise chickens and earn a handsome income by starting a poultry business? You can do it easily. But this requires you to have ample knowledge even about the minute details related to raising your chickens, letting them grow in a healthy and safe environment, and selling their eggs and meat as a full-fledged business.

So are you ready to raise your backyard chickens and earn money by selling them just like the professional chicken keepers do? If yes, then just flip the pages of this book. From constructing their housing to feeding them healthy treats to selling them for profits, you'll learn everything (yes, we literally mean "everything") about raising chickens. This book has it all.

Happy reading!

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## CHAPTER 1: Legality (and Workaround)

Before heading out on the journey of raising backyard chickens, it's important to ask the right question and that is: are you allowed to raise chickens in your area?

According to some people, there should be no problem. Having pet chickens should be like having any other pet animals such as cats and dogs. But the truth is that many suburban authorities and municipalities do not permit keeping chickens.

Even if you're allowed to keep chickens in the area you live, you'll be given a long list of conditions and rules to comply with. This can range from the number of chickens you can raise to the design of the chicken coop.

You can save yourself from coming across quite a lot of trouble if you have the know-how of all the rules before building a coop and bringing your feathered friends to their new home.

### Why Do We Need Rules for Backyard Chickens?

Backyard chickens were a common sight in America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Easy to breed, this domestic animal didn't occupy much space and a small stock was enough to supply the entire family meat and eggs with minimal expenses.

Besides this, they were used to fulfill many of their dietary requirements and supplied many food staples.

#### So, What Changed?

So how did the backyard chickens vanish from the scene?

By the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century, food production had become an organized industry and grocery stores were regularly supplied with poultry and eggs. Now, people could easily buy meat and eggs from supermarket to home, transport it courtesy the automobile and conveniently freeze the poultry - thanks to the refrigerator.

It was no longer necessary to go through the hassle of raising chickens just so you could have a hearty breakfast of omelets!

Simultaneously, during the affluent years' post World War II, modern American suburban areas were established. There was a need to promote these developments as a suave, urbane, and cosmopolitan place to live.

Doing away with the rural tradition of rearing farm animals was one way to take these communities forward. There was no place for backyard chickens as they were viewed as a nuisance. The farm animals were seen as a threat to public health and also viewed as something noisy and smelly.

Today, however, raising backyard chickens has proven to be worthwhile. With the ushering of organic food and growing health concerns, the trend of raising chickens is becoming popular.

While you're too eager and keen to start this endeavor, don't forget to have a peep into the rules and regulations covering the raising of chickens.

## **Common Restrictions Related to Backyard Chickens**

There are varying laws for each community. Some laws will not permit you to keep chickens at all while others will allow you to rear them provided you meet some conditions.

A 2008 report by the University of New Mexico studied various ordinances in 25 cities allowing people to raise chickens under some conditions. The report highlighted the following common themes:

### **Number of Chickens Allowed**

There is a limit on the number of chickens that can be kept in a household as per local rules. This is specified either by a flat number of birds allowed i.e. 3,4, or by using lot size.

### **Regulation of Roosters**

Many communities will not allow you to raise roosters because they are too noisy and may disturb the neighbors. However, the rule will not affect those people wishing to raise chickens for eggs. It's a common misconception that a rooster is needed for a hen to lay eggs.

### **Required Fees and Permits**

Many municipalities have the require you to have a permit to keep chickens. In some cases, the payment comprises of an annual or one-time fee.

### **Containment Requirements**

Some municipalities would require you to always keep your chickens confined in an outdoor run or a coop. This means that free-ranging is not allowed.

### **Regulations Related To Chicken Enclosures**

There might be some rules regarding how a coop has to be built as well as the material which will go in making it. Before construction, you might need building permits as well as the approval of coop plans.

### **Setback Requirements for Coops**

This will require you to maintain some distance in between outdoor runs, chicken coops, and neighboring properties. These requirements vary greatly and in communities having small lot size.

### **Restrictions Regarding the Slaughtering Of Chickens**

Some residential areas may deem slaughtering of chickens illegal. Those who want to raise chickens for meat or wish to cull a hen if it doesn't lay eggs, would have to be mindful of the no-kill policy.

### **Nuisance Clauses**

Chicken keeping is regulated by prohibiting nuisances resulting from improper maintenance and care of backyard chickens. Such regulation will strictly address issues such as noise, odor, and several conditions attracting pests and rodents, and disposal of manure.

## **How to Raise Chickens — Legally**

You need to dig a little deeper in your local zoning laws to see whether you can keep chickens at your place of residence or not. Then, you can have a look at any special regulations which can have an effect on building chicken housing.

Your property will be categorized as business, residential, agricultural, or any other. What does it mean?

Read it out below:

### **Agricultural Property**

This means that you can raise chickens without encountering any trouble. On your paperwork, you should be able to find a notice about Right to Farm bill. The Right to Farm bill states that legal and recognized methods of farming can be adopted and implemented at any time in the zone.

### **Residential, Residential/Agriculture/Other Type**

If it is any of the above or if you have leased and rented your home, you'll need to find out further as to what is allowed. Landlords may have certain additional requirements other than the local ordinances. Hence, read your lease agreement or talk it out with the landlord regarding pets or livestock.

Before you begin raising chickens, there are two laws and ordinances you need to be mindful about:

#### **1. Laws Concerning The Ownership Of Animals**

There might be some limits placed on the sex and number of birds as well as the location of chicken coops on your property. In some areas, the amount of property you own as well as the closeness to your neighbors can determine if you can keep birds and if you can, then how many. You may also need to acquire a written permission from your neighbors.

#### **2. Laws That Restrict The Types Of Housing Or Pens**

These deal with issues such as needing a permit to build a chicken coop to getting it inspected.

Find out what you are allowed to do from the right sources. If you recently bought your home, your deed and sales agreement will have zoning details listed on them.

If you can't figure out zoning category of your property, go to your city or township hall and have a look at the zoning map. In some places, you can request to get a copy or you can purchase it. In some township/city halls, you might need to look in a large wall map or in books.

Larger communities may also have a planning board that deals with issues related to zoning. In smaller areas, such as counties and villages, a county clerk or any animal control officer will answer any queries related to keeping animals. Issues pertaining to the construction of shelters and building fences are handled by another government unit.

If it's possible for you, get a copy of the ordinances or laws so you can keep referring to them as per need. In case of owning a copy, you can also show it to any neighbor who contests your right to keep animals or the number of animals you can legally own.

**Warning:**

Just because some people in your neighborhood are raising chickens, this doesn't mean you can too. It may or may not be legal. They may have taken them before there was a zoning change (people having animals before a zoning change are generally allowed to keep them afterwards too). It may be that some are raising chickens illegally too.

Even if you're told by your neighbors or your retailers that it's fine to raise chickens in your neighborhood, it's better to avoid any worse consequence by going to the right sources, acquiring legal information, and then taking the right decision. And when you're officially allowed to raise chickens in your backyard, nothing could be more charming than that!

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