Chickens – The Coop

Like everyone, chickens need some space. Depending on how often you plan on cleaning the coop, how it is laid out as well as the birds (size and number), will determine the size of the coop.

# Coop Requirements

A coop must be fitting to it’s environment & purpose. A coop should have plenty of space, good ventilation, lighting, protection from the elements and predators.

## Ventilation

 This is probably one of the most neglected elements of a coop. A well-constructed coop must have ventilation without a draft. Both ends of the coop should have vents(opposite of wind flow) as, it come in, the cold air enters the coop, picks up the ammonia and takes it out the top vent as it the air is warmed.

## Predator Prevention

 Predators can be quite damaging, regardless of the size Keep it tight, well

## General Spacing Requirements

 This is only one idea of spacing requirements I have seen others recommend area that were doubled or tripled.

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| General Spacing Requirements Per Bird in Square Feet inside Coops |
| Bantam | Typical Standards | Large Fowl |
| 2  | 3 | 4 |

## Perches and Perch Requirements

 We all like to sit on something especially on ‘your’ chair, like us chickens prefer some things over others. Their perches should be a minimum of 12” to 18” away from other objects , for head and tail space. And at least 18” to 24” above each perch for them to stand and jump up. Rounded wood can be used but, you must keep the size of the bird in mind. For larger heavy breeds some people will use 2” by 4’s” with rounded edges and smaller boards for the smaller breeds. For the all-natural people, braches with a 3”-4” diameter can be used. As a rule of thumb as long as the material is safe (non-slippery) you and your birds should be fine.

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| Perching Requirements in Inches in Length |
| Bantam | Typical Standards | Large Fowl |
| 6 to 8 | 8 to 10 | 10+ |

## Nest Boxes

Nest boxes come in a variety of options, from the traditional boxes to 5 (five) gallon buckets to totes. But when most people think of nest boxes they think of the 12”x12”x12” box, with a steep sharply pitched roof (to prevent them from perching and, thus pooping) . A lip on the front is also helpful to keep in nesting materials. Hens seem to seek out darker spaces. A small perch on the front is also quite common but where they perch they poop. I also suggest putting the nest box lower then the perches, about 1 foot above the floor for bantams and 2 feet for standards. One nest box is needed for every 4 hens.