

What To Expect With Your First Chicken Eggs | Questions and Answers



It's an exciting time when your hens have reached maturity and are ready to lay eggs. Most hens start to lay eggs around the age of 4 to 6 months although the time can actually vary depending on the breed and the time of year. As a first-time chicken owner, what can you expect with your first eggs? Southern States has the answers to your questions here:

How often do hens lay eggs?

Egg laying is not an exact science. Frequency of egg laying can vary according to many different factors: breed, time of year (length of daylight hours), and the age of the hen. Stress, feed consumption and disease can adversely impact egg production.

With all that said, on average, you can expect 3 hens to give you 2 eggs a day. If your goal is to collect a dozen eggs a day, you should have 18 hens.

How often should I collect eggs?

It is important to collect eggs multiple times a day. Frequent egg gathering ensures the eggs are clean and helps prevent bacterial growth. The longer the eggs stay in the chicken house the more likely they become dirty, broken, or deteriorate in quality. There is also a greater risk that your hens pick up the bad habit of egg-eating. Gathering twice a day is a good idea and it is recommended that you actually collect eggs three times a day during the heat of the summer to ensure the egg quality.

Should I wash the eggs?

Eggs are actually really clean until they become contaminated in the [nesting box](#). They have a protective coating which forms a barrier against bacteria. Most eggs can be cleaned off with a cloth, but if washing is necessary, rinse the eggs under warm water. Washing in cold water causes the interior of the egg to shrink and can allow bacteria to become absorbed into the egg. Be sure to dry the eggs as quickly as possible after rinsing.

How should I store my eggs?

Once you have collected and cleaned your eggs, put them in [egg cartons](#). Label the package with the collection date and store them in the refrigerator. Your eggs will stay fresh for one month when kept in the refrigerator.

Southern States has the answers to your questions about chickens along with other farm and garden information. Stop by [your local store](#) and talk to our experts. From knowing what to expect as a first-time chicken owner to discovering the best [poultry products](#), we have the information and the tools you need to get the job done.



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