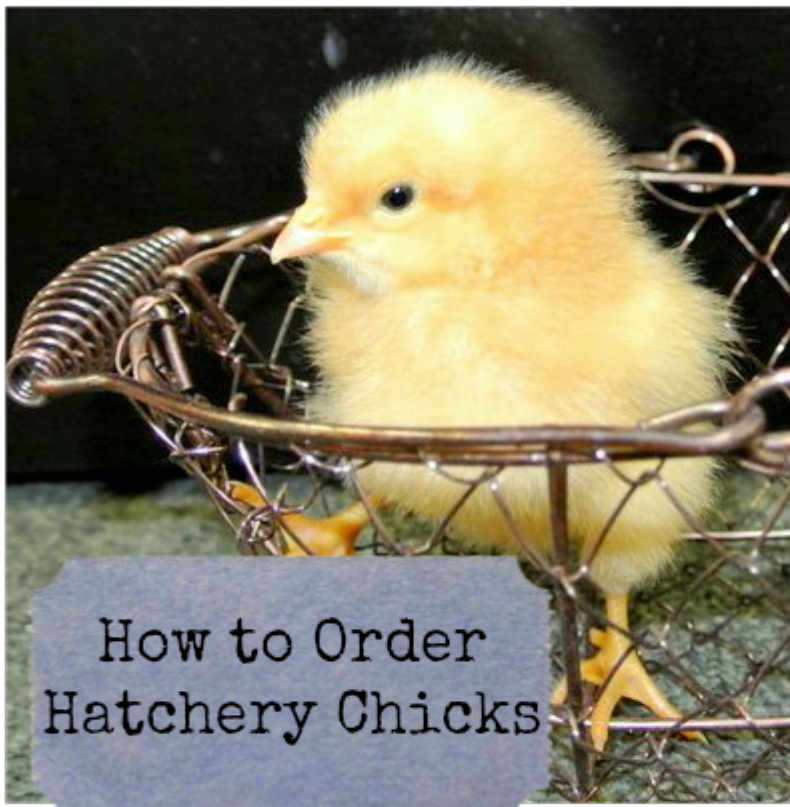


# How to Order Hatchery Chicks

## How to Order Hatchery Chicks



Once you have decided to join the many who enjoy backyard chicken raising, you will want to get started as soon as possible. One way to begin is to order chicks from a reputable hatchery. There are many businesses to choose from. You may have a hatchery local to you that does not ship but that you could visit in person to pick up the chicks. Others ship using the postal service and two day shipping. Read reviews, talk to friends who have ordered and try to choose a hatchery as close to you as possible. This will reduce the stress on the new hatchlings.

## How does this work?

Once a chick hatches and is packed for shipping, the baby can survive forty eight to seventy two hours without additional food and water if kept warm. Hatcheries often require a minimum order of twelve to fifteen chicks so they can huddle together and stay warm during shipping.



## Decisions Decisions

Hatchery personnel should be happy to help you with questions about your order. It is helpful to have an idea of what you want to order before you place the call.

Will you be raising egg layers only? Maybe you want breeds that are dual purpose and could be used for meat, too. Are you limited to having only hens and are you willing to pay more to ensure that you receive pullets. This is called ordering sexed pullets and while not a guarantee, it will reduce your chances of getting a rooster in the bunch.

Many hatcheries offer a vaccination against Marek's disease before the chicks leave the facility. There is an upcharge for this and while it is not required, you will want to decide how you will answer this question. ([Marek's Disease](#) is a neuroplasmic (tumor producing) disease caused by a herpes virus. The symptoms include progressive paralysis. )

When do you want the chicks shipped? When deciding on a shipping date remember that the chicks will need to be picked up promptly from the post office, brought home and put into the brooder. Having the brooder warmed and set up will reduce stress on the chicks. Remember to use warm water in the drinking fount. The chicks will be living in a brooder type set up for the first 8 to 12 weeks depending on the weather outside. Will your outside temperature in 8 to 10 weeks be warm enough for the chicks to be in the coop? If not you will have some large birds living in your house. Along the same line, will you have the coop ready in 8 to 12 weeks if you are building a coop? [Read more about how to decide when to start with chicks here.](#)

## What breeds?



Many breeds are not available year round from the hatcheries. Others have a window of availability. The standard egg laying breeds are commonly available from March to June. This will vary slightly from business to business.

Knowing what to expect and a little pre-planning will make the

call to the hatchery go much smoother. Enjoy your new babies. They grow up so quickly.

If you would like more information on raising chickens please consider my new book, [Chickens From Scratch, Raising Chickens](#)



[from Hatch to Egg Laying and Beyond.](#)

This post was also published in [Backyard Poultry Mag.com](#)

[When is the Best Time to Start Baby Chicks](#)