

My Chicken Yard Check List



Chicken Wire: You're looking for loose wire or wire that's no longer connected.

- Reinforce it, staple it, cut it or repair it.

Fencing/Latches:

- Is the fencing still stable and predator-proof?
- Are gophers digging under it?
- Rats or mice chewing on the base or borders?
- Are you missing screws, nails, bolts or clips in gate latches or door closures?

Roosts:

- Are roosts sturdy?
- Any nails or screws showing through?
- Check the cracks of roosts and (branch-roosts) for mites and add Diatomaceous Earth in all the cracks.

Nesting Boxes:

- Are your girls able to get in and out of the nesting boxes easily without damaging their feathers?
- Are the nesting boxes up too high?
- Do you have flock members sleeping and pooping in the nesting boxes? Is it stable?
- Any loose bolts, screws, exposed nails?
- Is it time for a Double Scrub? Double Scrub = completely remove, clean and restock. All matters addressed: (poop, broken egg shells/yolks and food removed. Add shavings or straw, pest-reducing nesting herbs and Diatomaceous Earth.

Feeders/Fountains/Containers:

- Is they working for you?
- Are the feeders and fountains within easy reach?
- Where are you storing feed in relation to where you serve food/vitamins and supplements?
- Would a larger feeder or container be better for your situation given the number of chickens you have now?
- Is the water fountain holding water or is it tipped just slightly with a tiny drip? (making a muddy mess?)
- So tired of re-filling heavy water fountains? Consider an auto-fountain?

Toys and Hanging Baskets:

- Where are your chicken toys? Buried under straw? Full of mud and dirt? Find them. Clean them and fill with treats to reduce boredom. DIY instructions found back on the blog.
- Are your hanging baskets at the right height? Any loose wires or dangling string/twine that a chicken can get tangled in? No hanging basket? DIY instructions found back on the blog.

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The Ground:

- Muddy, wet mess? How can you correct this? Maybe a temporary tarp is in order? Straw? Shavings? A new or update roof? Sometimes a little gravel can help the situation.
- Dry, dusty, hard as a rock with little or no "life" to it? Bring in bags (or truck loads) of compost, plant chicken-friendly plants and greenery.
- Lot's of poop? This is an easy one. Clean it up. Shovel it up, scrape it up, rake it up. Get it up.

Predator Poop:

- Check for mouse droppings along roosts, in feeder troughs and near water fountains. Put food up each night for a week and set traps each evening. Rodents love peanut butter, cheese, chicken food (right?) and sunflower seeds.
- Gopher holes. Gophers are predators to chicken food not chickens so much.
- Back filled dirt at the base of the coop? You may have skunks, opossums or any variety of rodent. I use Hav-A-Heart traps, the small size, for these predators.

Predator Trap Bag:

1. I strongly suggest upcycling a 50 lb poultry feed bag.
2. Shove your trap inside the empty bag.
3. Cut a handle opening where the trap handle is located.
4. Throw two eggs inside, set the trap.
5. Place trap in predator "zone".

Stale and Moldy Foods:

- I keep extra grocery bags and plastic newspaper bags in my storage shed for this.
- Have gloves on hand? Moldy, decaying food and greens have a tendency to linger on your hands long after the quick chore has taken place.
- Pick up old squash shells, decaying and moldy fruit, excess shared-human-food that you shared but they aren't eating.
- Check feeders for damp or molding feed. Do NOT dump out on ground. Throw away. Moldy feed is toxic.

Bailing Twine/Feed Bag Pull String:

- Collect bailing twine that is laying around. You don't want a chicken to get caught in it and run themselves into a tangled panic mess.
- Using twine to hang feeders or a boredom basket? Trim it if it's frayed or hanging onto the ground.
- Gather up feed bag pull-string too.

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