

# Chickens

By Cindy Grigg

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A chicken is a bird. Birds are the only type of animal that has feathers. There are more chickens on earth than people! That's because people raise chickens for their eggs and for their meat.

Most farms have some chickens. People like to eat chicken eggs. All birds, including chickens, lay eggs. Female birds lay eggs. Chickens are an important food source for people.

A male chicken is called a rooster or a cock. A hen is a female chicken. A chicken has two legs. A chicken has two wings. All birds have two wings, but not all birds can fly.

You may have heard someone say that something is "as rare as hen's teeth." This is a joke because hens do not have teeth. No birds have teeth. Instead, birds have a beak. Inside their bodies, chickens have a special body part called a gizzard. The gizzard is a tough, muscular organ that helps the chicken grind up its food. Chickens often swallow small rocks. The rocks go into the gizzard. The rocks help grind up food.

A chicken likes to peck. This is how it eats food. Chickens eat many different types of food. They like to eat grains like wheat or corn. They like to eat seeds. They like to eat insects and worms. They even like to eat leftover food from the kitchen!

Baby chickens are called chicks. Some chickens are white. Some are brown. Some are black. Some even have speckled feathers. When a white chick first hatches out of its egg, it is small and has yellow feathers. As the baby chick grows, its feathers will change from yellow to white.

Chickens are active during the day. Roosters make a loud crowing sound. Roosters are larger than hens and are more brightly colored. Both hens and roosters have a red comb on top of their head. Roosters' combs are bigger than hens'. A group of chickens is called a flock.



Chickens

## Questions

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What do birds have that other animals don't?
- A. two legs
  - B. wings
  - C. eggs
  - D. feathers
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Which type of chicken lays eggs?
- A. rooster
  - B. hen
  - C. chick

Name \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What do chickens NOT eat?
- A. worms
  - B. people
  - C. seeds
  - D. grains
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A baby chicken is called a:
- A. rooster
  - B. hen
  - C. chick
  - D. cock
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What is a male chicken called?
- A. hen
  - B. rooster
  - C. chick
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. What is a female chicken called?
- A. hen
  - B. rooster
  - C. chick
  - D. cock
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Chickens have teeth.
- A. false
  - B. true
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A chicken has four legs and a beak.
- A. false
  - B. true
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A white chicken will hatch a baby chick that is yellow.
- A. true
  - B. false
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A group of chickens is called a:
- A. comb
  - B. nest
  - C. flock
  - D. beak

**If you lived on a farm, would you like to have a flock of chickens? Why or why not?**

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