



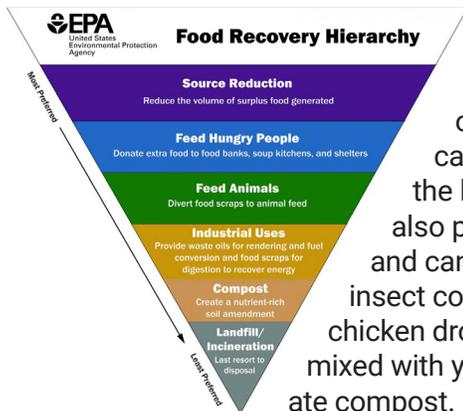
CHICKEN KEEPING

NATURE'S WAY OF COMPOSTING

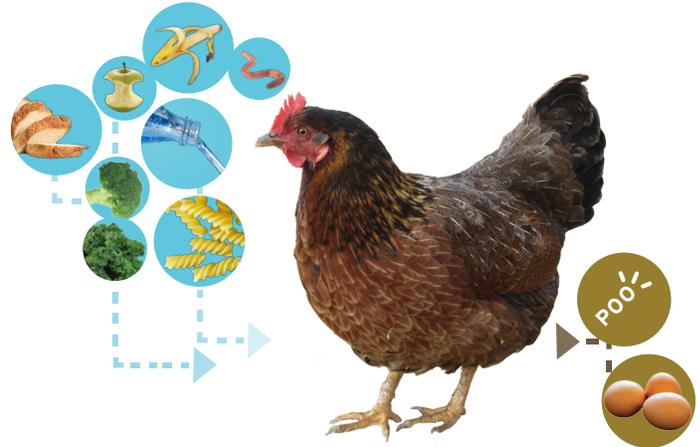
Chickens can recycle your food scraps. Chicken keeping and composting methods go hand-in-hand to keep food waste out of the landfill while creating healthy soil. Learn more: austintexas.gov/chickenkeeping

REDUCE WASTE BY FEEDING ANIMALS

Keeping chickens is a great way to keep your food waste out of the landfill. The EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy shows feeding animals as the third best way to reduce food waste (after reducing the volume of surplus food and feeding hungry people). The average chicken eats about one quarter pound of food per day or about seven pounds per month. People throw away



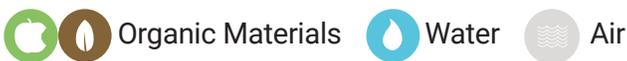
food scraps every day and feeding some of it to chickens can keep it out of the landfill. Chickens also produce eggs and can provide natural insect control; additionally, chicken droppings can be mixed with yard waste to create compost.



BENEFITS

- Reduce waste
- Natural insect control
- Natural lawn fertilizer
- Save money by requesting a smaller trash cart
- Help Austin reach its Zero Waste goal to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills by 90% by 2040.

BASIC INGREDIENTS



CHICKEN COOP ESSENTIALS

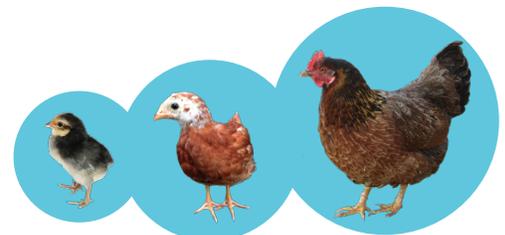
COOP- this is a covered, secure area where the chickens sleep. The coop needs shade and adequate ventilation and approximately four square feet per standard-size bird. Most importantly, it should be secure. Make sure the location is in compliance with city ordinances.

RUN- this is an area, usually enclosed, that the chickens use during the day. The run should have at least six square feet per bird.

NESTING BOX- these are a comfortable spaces for chickens to lay eggs within the coop. Nesting boxes should provide privacy and good ventilation. The coop will need one nesting box per four or five hens. Dimensions are generally 12 inches long, 12 inches wide and 14 inches high.

ROOSTS- bars where chickens perch to sleep at night inside the coop. Roosts should ideally be 18 to 24 inches from the ground, with 8 to 10 inches of roosting space per bird.

BEDDING- used to line the coop and nesting boxes. Bedding can consist of leaves, straw, hay, pine shavings, wood chips or other organic, absorbent materials. Do not use cedar or juniper shavings!



CHICKEN COOPS

Chicken coops may be stationary or mobile. Some have runs included and others do not.



- 1 Stationary with run included
- 2 Stationary without run
- 3 Chicken Tractor

HOW TO MAKE COMPOST WHILE KEEPING CHICKENS

A compost pile can be built inside the coop and run. This allows chickens do the turning and limits scratching on the rest of the yard. Alternately, a compost pile can be maintained separate from the coop area. Chicken droppings and food scraps can be placed in the compost pile along with yard waste.

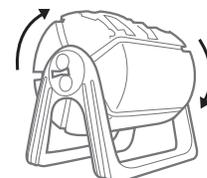
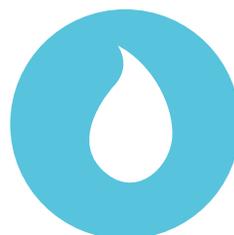
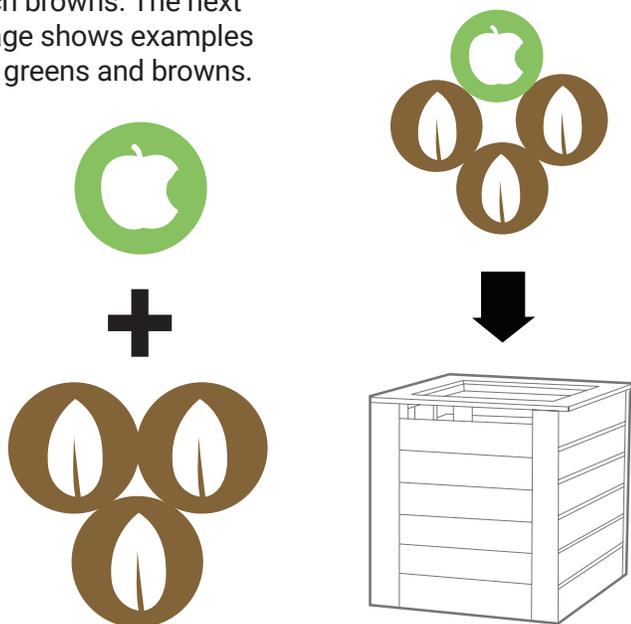
1 Each time you add materials to your pile, add roughly one share of nitrogen-rich greens and three shares of carbon-rich browns. The next page shows examples of greens and browns.

2 Place materials in your compost pile, pre-made compost bin or tumbler.

3 Add some water (e.g., by rinsing out your kitchen compost collector) and mix. Make sure your pile has enough air and water. The mixture should be as moist as a wrung-out sponge.

4 Turn or mix occasionally and allow decomposition to occur. Your consistency will influence your results.

Turning	Finished compost
once a week	3 to 4 months
bi-weekly	4 to 6 months
once a month	8 to 12 months



HOW TO START

SELECTING YOUR FLOCK:



CHICKS

Generally under a week or so old.



PULLETS

Female chickens under one year old.



HENS

Female chickens one year or older.

CHICKS

- Available at more retail locations
- Greater variety of breeds
- More intensive early care
- Longer wait time for egg production

PULLETS AND HENS

- Less breed variety at this age
- Ready to go "out of the box"
- Generally faster to produce first egg

TIPS

Chickens are social animals. Try a minimum two to three to start.

Chickens need a constant supply of fresh, accessible water. For chicks, do not use an open dish, because they can drown.

INTEGRATION INTO EXISTING FLOCK

- Keep new birds in quarantine for at least 28 days.
- Do not integrate chickens with signs of illness.
- Ideally introduce at least two birds to the flock at a time.
- Best to introduce birds of similar size.
- Introduce by placing new chickens on roost at night.

WHAT NOT TO FEED YOUR CHICKENS



MOLDY FOOD



HIGHLY PROCESSED FOODS



JUNK FOOD, CHOCOLATE OR CANDY

CHICKEN KEEPING REBATE PROGRAM

Most Austinites* can earn a \$75 rebate on a chicken coop through the City of Austin Home Composting Rebate Program. Just follow these steps:

- 1 Take a free chicken keeping class.
- 2 Purchase a chicken coop from any retailer of your choosing.
- 3 Submit an online rebate application with copies of your receipt or download and print a PDF application.
- 4 Receive a \$75 rebate check from the City of Austin by mail.**

Find the class schedule, application and more information at: austintexas.gov/chickenkeeping

Email questions to: composting@austinrecycles.com

* Only City of Austin customers who pay the Clean Community Fee on their utility bills and who have not already received a Home Composting Rebate are eligible for the rebate, but anyone may take the class.

** Rebate checks will be issued and mailed to the account holder name and address unless noted otherwise. Please allow a minimum of eight weeks for processing.

KNOW THE RULES

THE KEEPING OF CHICKENS MUST COMPLY WITH ALL SECTIONS OF TITLE 3

CAN'T ROAM FREE (§3-2-1)

"Except as specifically provided in this title, an owner or handler may not allow livestock, fowl, a dog, or other domestic or dangerous animal or reptile to run at large."

CAN'T MAKE EXCESSIVE NOISE (§3-2-2)

"An owner or handler may not keep an animal that makes frequent or long, continued noise that is disturbing to a person of normal sensibilities."

MUST BE KEPT IN CLEAN AND HEALTHY CONDITION (§3-2-5)

(A) An animal's owner shall keep the animal in a clean, sanitary, and healthy condition.

(B) An animal's owner or handler shall provide for the animal:

- (1) regular and adequate amounts of nutritious food that is appropriate for the species and that maintains the animal in good health;
- (2) a constant and adequate supply of clean, fresh, potable water that keeps the animal hydrated for environmental conditions; and
- (3) care and medical treatment for injuries, parasites and diseases that is sufficient to maintain the animal in good health and minimize suffering.

(C) An animal's owner shall provide the animal with shelter that:

- (1) is large enough for the animal to enter, stand, turn around and lie down in a natural manner;
- (2) keeps the animal dry;
- (3) provides the animal with natural or artificial shade from direct sunlight;
- (4) protects the animal from excessive heat and cold and other adverse weather conditions; and
- (5) is adequately ventilated.

(D) An animal's owner may not confine the animal to the extent that it is forced to stand, sit or lie in its own excrement.

(E) An animal's owner shall regularly maintain the animal and its shelter to prevent odor or a health or sanitation problem.

(F) An animal's owner shall provide the animal with exercise space that is large enough to prevent injury and keep the animal in good condition.

(G) It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under this section that the animal's treatment was as directed by a licensed veterinarian.

ENCLOSURE FOR FOWL (§3-2-16)

"An enclosure used to keep two or more fowl must be located at least **50 feet** from a residence or business structure, excluding the residence or business of the fowl's owner or handler."

ALSO CHECK ANY HOA, NEIGHBORHOOD OR PROPERTY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES.



austintexas.gov/chickenkeeping

composting@austinrecycles.com

Home Composting Rebate information:
austintexas.gov/composting

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN SAVE MONEY ON YOUR UTILITY BILL?

DOWNSIZE YOUR CART AND SAVE: By keeping chickens, composting, recycling and donating unwanted items you may be able to downsize your trash cart – the smaller the cart, the less it costs!

Call 512-494-9400 to request a smaller trash cart or an additional blue recycling cart at no charge.