

Re: How many hens?

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- *From:* a_l_p <hay_hell_pea@xxxxxxxxxxx>
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lee wrote:

Hi all, iam thinking of getting a few hens (4) and would like to know how big the hen house will need to be, One iam looking at is 5.5ft x 3.5ft x 2.5ft. is this too small ? looking at sussex breeds. also, will a run of around 8ft x 5ft be ok? Thanks for you help, Lee.

Jill's answer is as usual excellent. From a different point of view I suggest "the bigger the better" because if you enjoy your hens you'll probably end up with more than 4

:~)

especially if you are not very disciplined about killing them off and replacing them regularly. They don't keep on laying full-steam forever. But if you have only 4, by the time they're due for the off you'll know them, they're your little feathery buddies.... What are you going to do? Let them live into retirement, sweet old ladies who don't eat all that much really, or.....

And preferably you'll get a house you can get into and hang out with them, see what they're up to, get to know their habits. After all that's half the fun of having them! And it makes it much easier for cleaning, for catching them in the dark if they need to be moved. The sound of hens murmuring half-asleep "Chook?" sounds is a small but precious bonus.

A tall house, one big enough for you, can provide lots of floor room if you make use of mezzanine floors, ramps, perches. That makes it a more interesting home for your hens too, and by way of justifying the cost it can also provide enough room to store the mash, grain and grit. You've got to keep them somewhere! And if the bulk containers (with secure lids) are in the chooky house you don't have to go back to the shed or the garage to replenish the mash or grit feeders.

A L P

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