

3 Rules You Must Follow To Protect Your Chickens From A Gruesome Death



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Rule 1: Know Thy Enemies (or in this case, your chickens' enemies)

In order to protect your chickens from predators you need to know who those predators are, and their means of attack.

“Better the devil you know than the devil you don’t”

Make sure you know which chicken predators are local to your area. Depending on where you live the list can be quite long and include:

- foxes
- coyotes
- raccoons
- weasels
- opossums
- fisher cats
- hawks
- owls
- snakes
- rodents
- dogs
- cats



Yes, dear Fido can be one of the biggest threats.

Just because you love your dogs and your chickens, doesn't mean that they will love each other. Some dogs can be trained to guard chickens, but don't assume that your dog will. Be cautious when making the introductions and make sure your dog is leashed.

Don't forget your neighbors' dogs! Make sure they don't wander over and decimate your flock. This can be a serious problem for both your chickens and your friendship.

Domestic cats can also be a problem for baby chicks. They tend to shy away from full grown chickens, but have been know to attack the smaller bantam chickens.



Rule Two: Get Inside The Mind Of Your Enemies

Chicken predators can be as sly as a fox, regal as an eagle, or clever as a coon

Do not underestimate the ingenuity of a hungry critter.

To outwit them you need to be viewing your flock from their eyes. How can they get to those tasty chickens and eggs? Unfortunately in more ways than you may have considered.

Foxes are very agile creatures and can scale a 6' fence, fit through a small hole and even dig their way in. If a fox gets into a hen house there will not be a bird left standing.

Foxes are not the only burrowing predators. Raccoons, skunks, weasels and dogs will also try to tunnel under your fence to get to your chickens, chicks and their eggs.

Raccoons will also reach through a chain link fence to grab a chicken by the neck and decapitate it. Not a pretty sight!



Some predators like rats and mice will be more interested in your eggs and chicken feed than your chicks but can cause chaos if they get into the coop.

Although most predators attack from the ground, aerial predators like hawks and owls attack from above. Hawks will attack in daylight and owls at night.

Dogs will just kill for the sport of it and leave the dead carcasses strewn around.

Think like a predator and seek out the vulnerabilities in your chicken coop and run.



Rule Three: Fortify Your Stronghold

All is not lost. To protect your chicken you need to secure your chicken house and run.

Fortify your stronghold!

Build a strong, secure chicken coop.

Cover all windows with chicken wire or hardware cloth. Make sure all doors latch securely and are raccoon proof. If a young child can get into the coop, so can a raccoon. These critters are very crafty and resourceful. Raccoons can figure out how to open most fastenings.



When installing the latch on your coop make sure that it cannot close and latch itself and lock you inside!

Surround and secure the chicken run with hardware cloth or a wooden fence.

Chicken wire may keep some predators out, but for the stronger more determined ones hardware cloth, which is made of welded wire in a square grid, is the only predator-proof option.

To further deter predators, some people install an electric fence. Not the cheapest option, but effective. Barbed wire on the top will also deter climbers.

If hawks or owls are common in your area, make sure the top of the run is covered so that they cannot swoop down and grab your chickens.

Another option is to try and scare them away by hanging bright, shiny, reflective objects around the coop.



Make sure that predators cannot dig their way into the chicken run or house. There are several ways to prevent this.

First of all, make sure there is no gap between the fence surrounding the chicken run and the ground.

Next, consider one of the following:

1. Dig down a foot all around the run and bury chicken wire, hardware cloth or plywood all around.
2. Extend the chicken wire or hardware cloth out a few feet from bottom of fence, lay flat on the ground and bury it. This will frustrate and deter the predators trying to dig their way in. Make sure it is attached to the bottom of the fence.

Cut the grass and clear the surrounding area of woodpiles, junk, etc so that the predators do not have a place to hide. They will be more reluctant to attack if they have to cross an open field.

It may not be possible to build a 100% predator-proof coop and run, but following the above steps can go along way to securing your safety of your chickens and saving them from a gruesome death!

For a safe, secure chicken coop we recommend these excellent [chicken house plans](#) available for immediate download.

[Click here to visit website](#)

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