

DIY Easy Chicken Coop

step-by-step guide



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DIY Chicken Coop

We created a simple and easy design that everybody can build, even if you lack woodworking skills. The design doesn't contain fancy windows or decorations and only uses straight cuts.

You can open up the coop on the top and sides for easy maintenance and egg collection.

Features of the Coop

- 20" x 6ft coop, fit for 4 medium or 6 small hens
- you can open the roof for easy maintenance
- you can open the entire side for entrance and egg collection
- it's standing on legs, so the hens can use it as a shelter
- there is space for 2 or 3 roosting bars
- there is plenty of space for 2 to 4 nesting boxes
- it's easy to install with only straight cuts
- the sides of the roof have open space for ventilation

What you need

Here is the material list. You will also need screws and standard timber tools, like a saw and an electric drill..

Item	Material	Amount / Length
Base Plate	3/4" x 20" x 6ft plywood/hardwood	1
Legs	4x4" ground contact wood pressured lumber	8 ft
Frame	2x4" studs for the frame	40 ft
Sidings	1x6" rough pressure-treated lumber (or any sidings you like)	25 ft ²
Roof	20" x 6ft plywood or roofing material	1
Hinges	2 door hinges and 2 standard hinges	4
Roosting	2x4" roosting bar	2

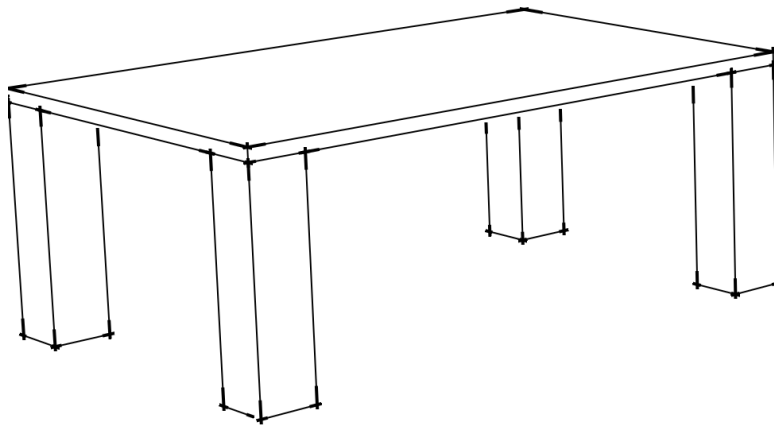


1. The Basis

The chicken coop stands on its legs. This provides shelter for the chickens, prevents the coop from getting wet and provides extra protection against predators.

Cut the legs to the proper size

Take a 4x4 and cut the legs for the coop to the proper length. We will use post holders later to install them, so we cut them to the exact size. Our legs are 15". Make them longer if you're going to dig them in.



Assemble the Base of the Chicken Coop

Use a 20" x 6ft piece of 3/4" or 1" plywood for the base plate. Create the base of the chicken coop by screwing the legs through the base plate from the top. Use 3-4 long screws per leg, as there will be shear forces on the legs when it's windy. We use an inch of phenolic plywood for its durability and water resistance.



Tip

If your coop has long legs, you can create triangles with a wooden plate to prevent the coop from wiggling side to side. Just connect the base and legs with a 45 degree board to create the triangle.

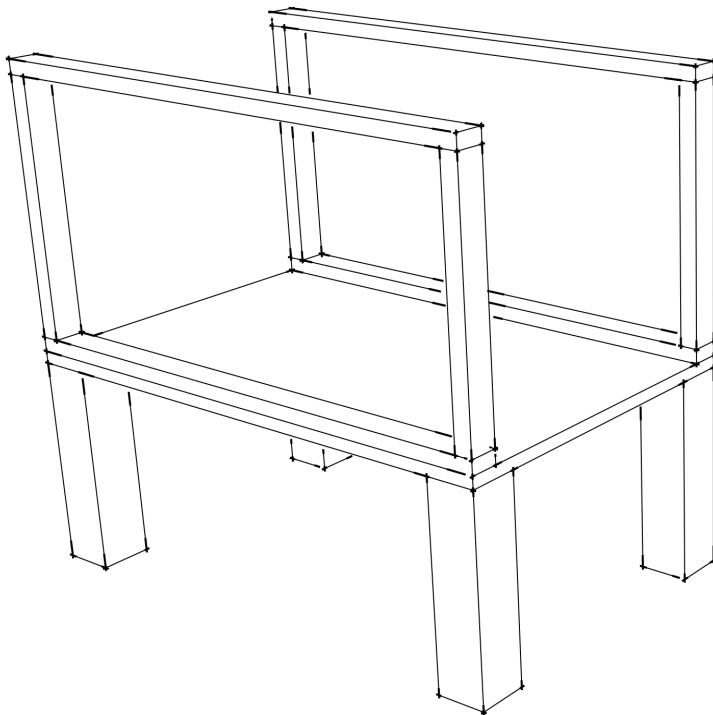
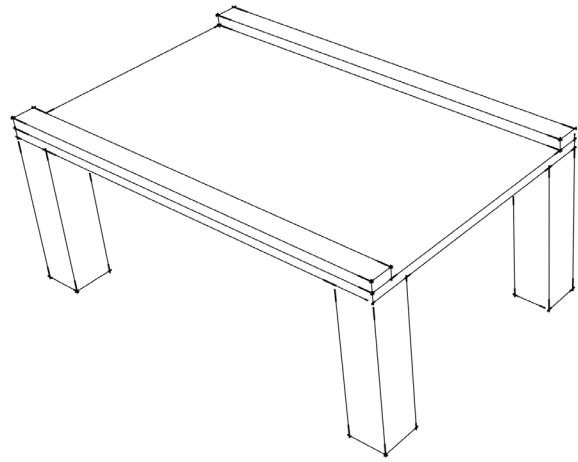
2. The Frame

The frame of the coop will hold the sidings. It's the skeleton of the coop that carries the roof and the maintenance door.



Install the base of the frame

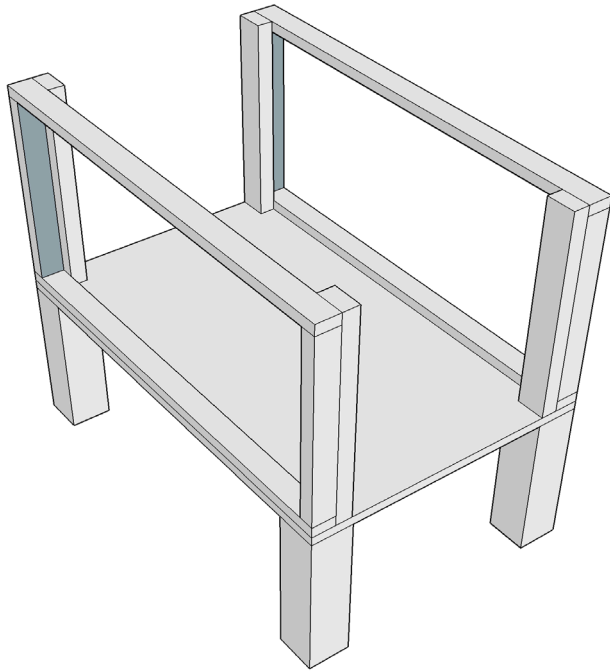
Install the Base Frame by screwing 2x4's onto the base. Turn the "table" you made in the previous step upside down, so you can screw through the plate into the wood. This way, the board will be firmly attached to the studs.



Install the Long Sides

With the base layer in place, build the side frames on top of it. Start with the long sides (the front and back) of the chicken coop.

Feel free to adjust the size to your needs as the design is flexible. Check our [chicken coop size calculator](#) to see how much space you need for your hens.



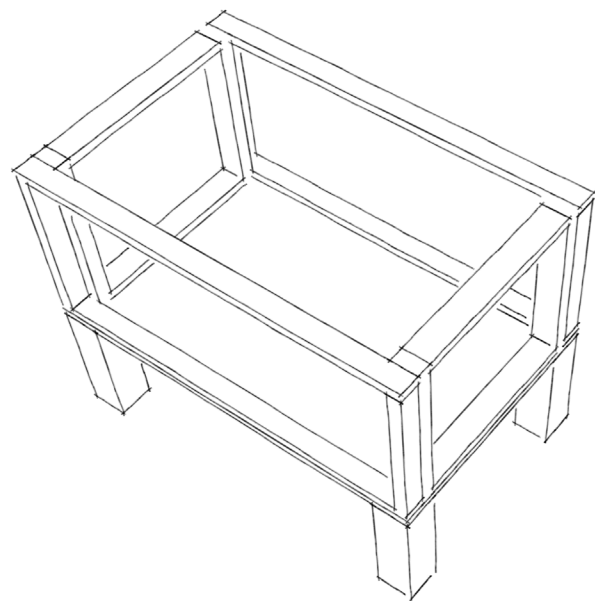
Install the Short Sides

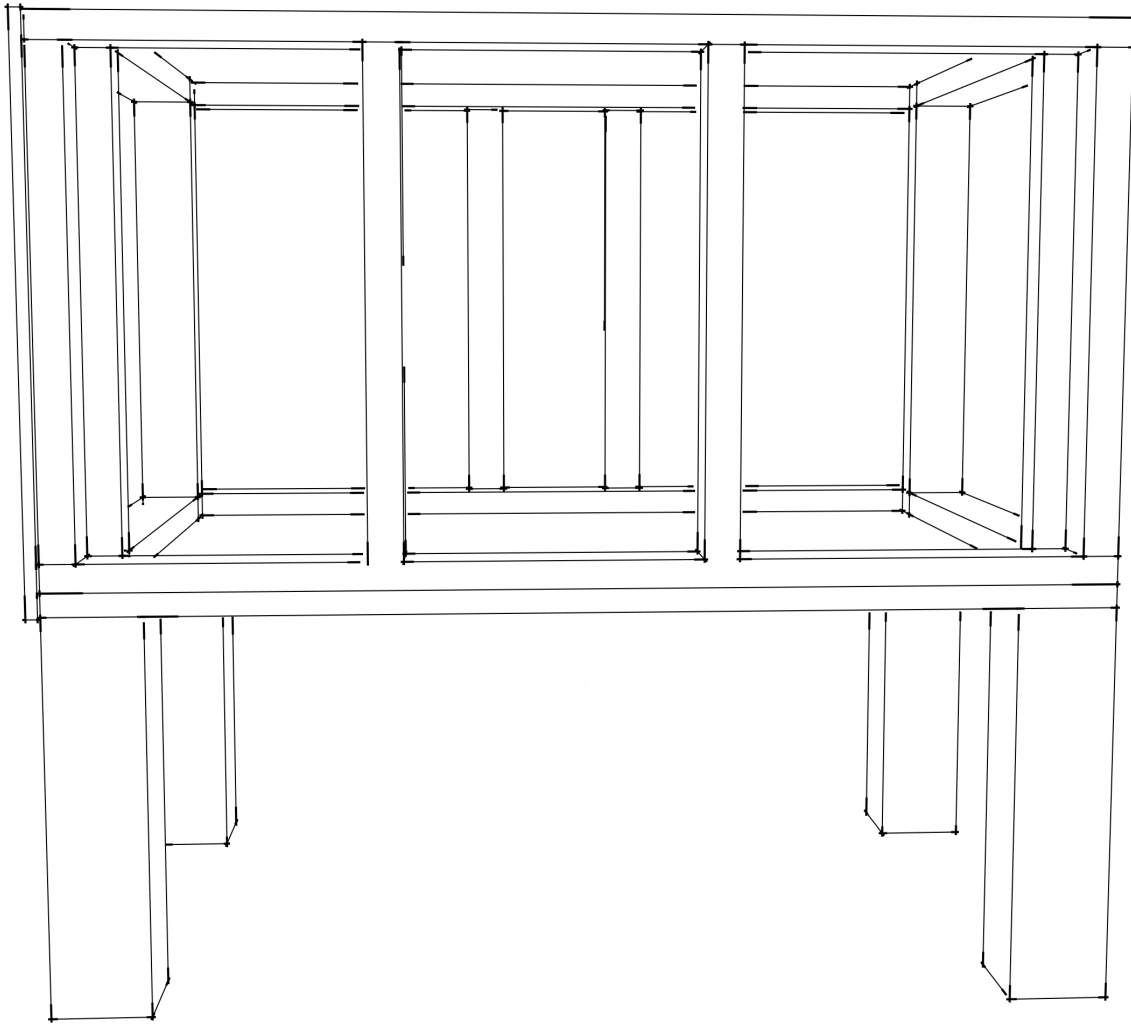
Build a new frame on the inside of the long side frames to build the shorter sides. You can just screw through the existing pieces.



Complete the Top

Complete the top of the frame with 2x4s by screwing wood in wood. You can use corner anchors to reinforce the frame, but the frame will be rigid enough without anchors when the sidings are installed.





Reinforce the Frame

Add some extra 2x4's in the middle of the long side to get a rigid structure. We will also use these 2x4s to fix the sidings later on.

Do the same at the other side, where the entrance comes. Adjust to the width of your chicken coop door. Bear in mind that some automatic chicken coop doors aren't that wide.



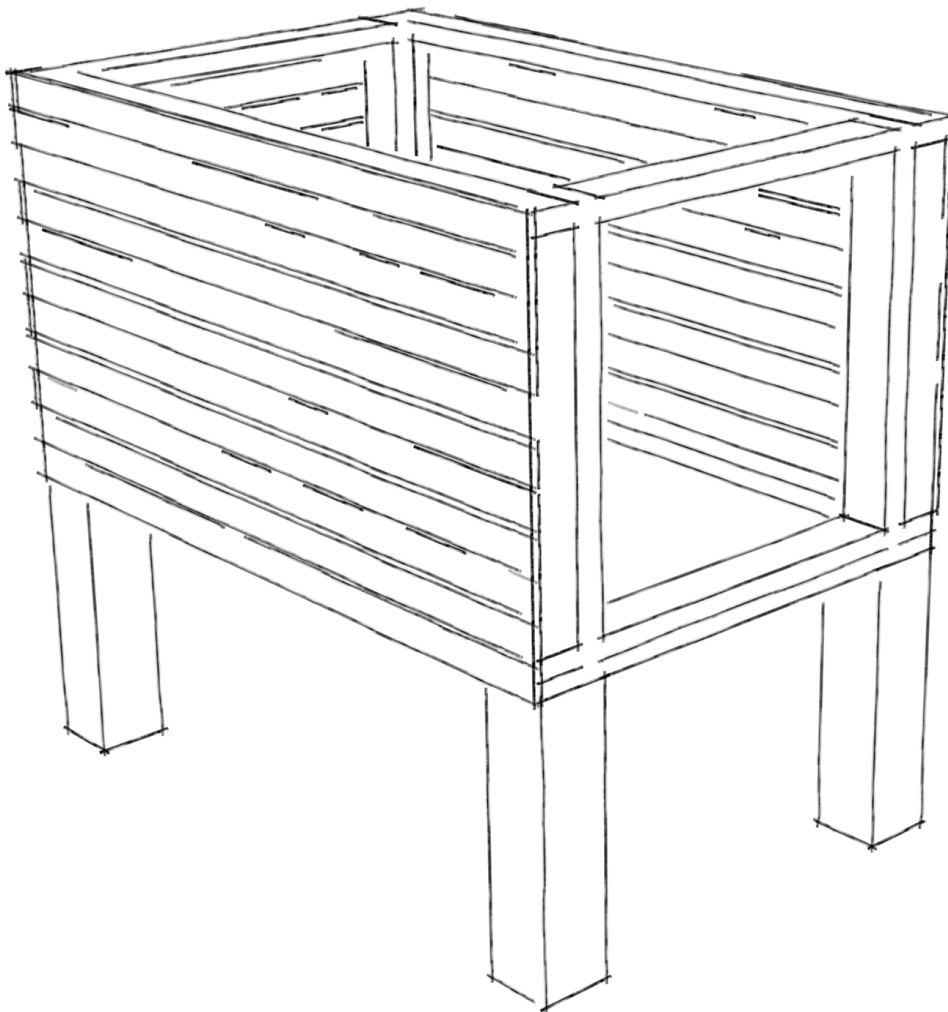
Tip

Now is a good time to add some roosting bars. It will be much more difficult once you've installed the sidings later. Check our [chicken coop guide](#) for the correct roosting bar dimensions.

3. The Walls

Add the Sidings

Cut the sidings to the proper length and screw them on the frame. Start at the top, so you are level with the frame. It doesn't really matter how much the sidings stick out on the bottom.

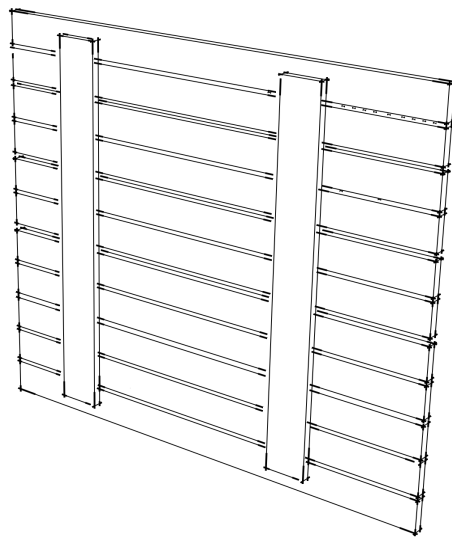


Leave one of the short sides completely open. This side will get a large door that can be used for cleaning and to get access to the nesting boxes.

3. The Door

Assemble the Door

Create a door with a couple of sidings by cross-fixing them with lumber on the back. Leave some space at the bottom and top to make sure the door fits when it's closed. Also, leave some extra room on the side where the door locks, as it falls on top of the frame when the door is closed.



Attach hinges

Attach two strong hinges to the door before installing it. The hinges need to be strong enough to carry the door when it's fully open. Use screws that are long enough to go through both the front sidings and the reinforcement at the back.

Install the Door

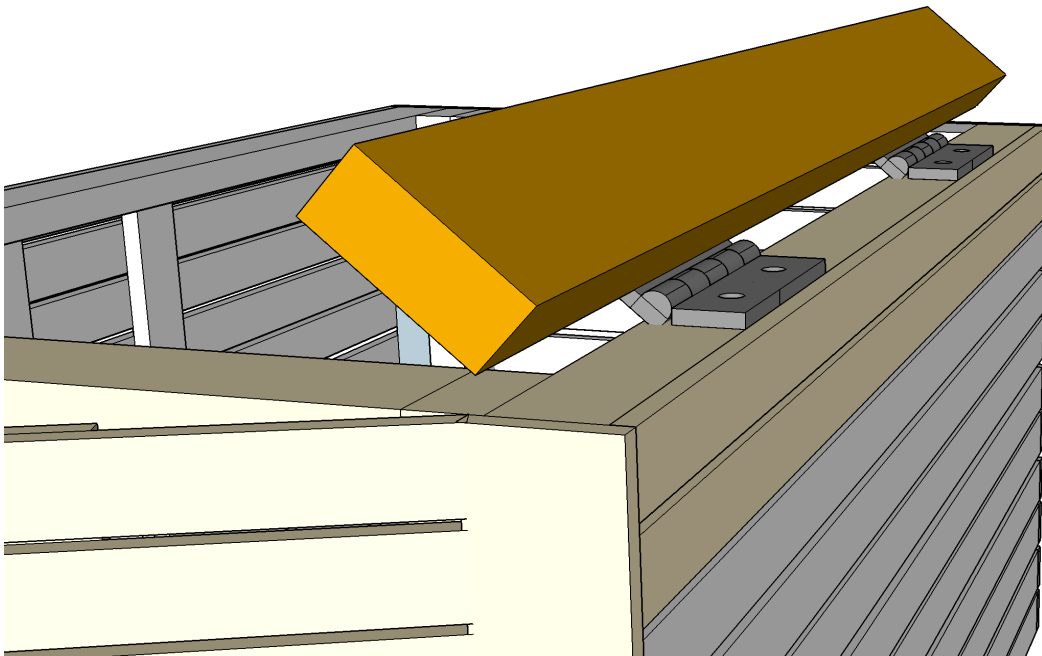
Install one vertical siding on the right side of the door. This is where the hinges will attach. Keep the door in place in the closed position when screwing the hinges. Check our visual step-by-step instruction guide on the website to see how it looks in real life.

4. The Roof

Install The Roof Base

Attach hinges to a 2x4 and install it on the top of the back frame. Attach the hinges on the opposite sides, as shown in the picture. Use two hinges and distribute them evenly over the length of the chicken coop.

Put the hinges as close to the back as possible so that there is plenty of room for the roof to open.

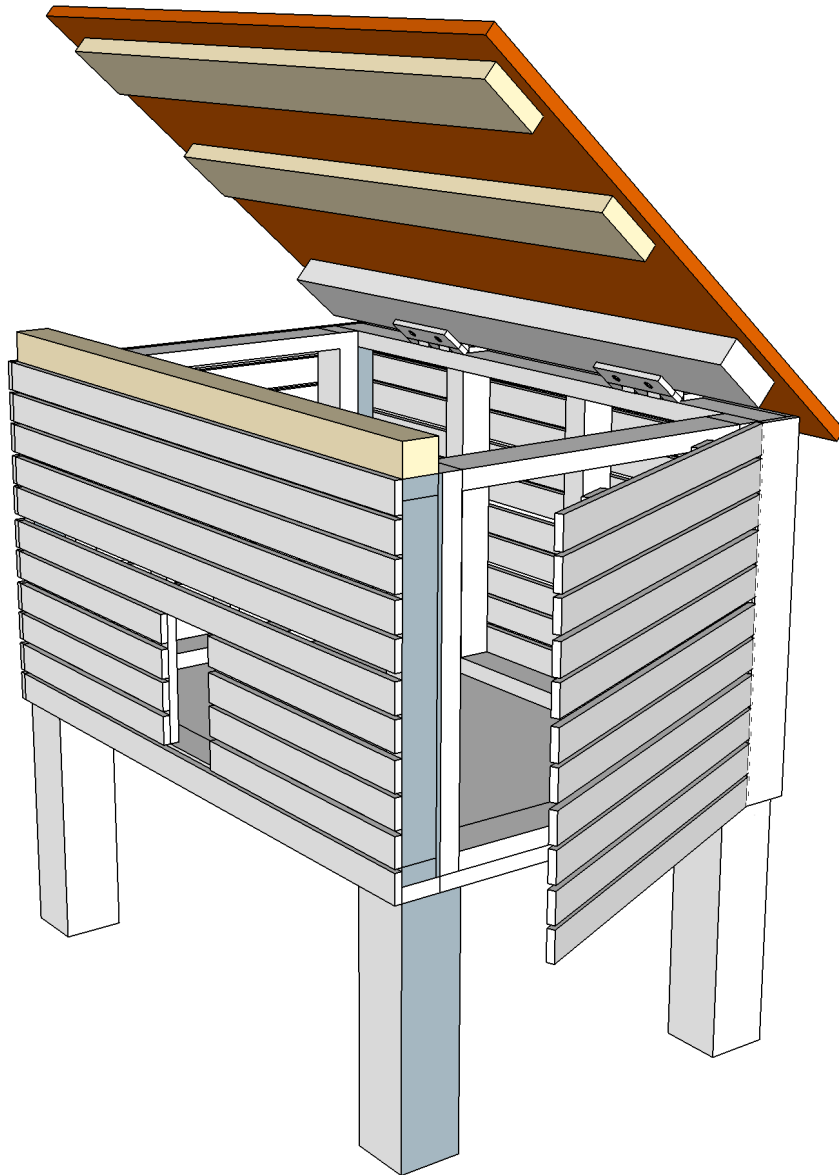


Before you complete the roof, verify that the rooftop will open smoothly over the back of the coop if you attach it to the base. If the roof can't open, you can:

- move the hinges to the back
- get a 4x4 to win some height
- get larger hinges

Complete the Roof

Use two extra 2x4s and some plywood or roofing material to construct the roof. On the front of the coop, add an extra 2x4 to give the roof some slope when it's closed. Make the roof a little bigger to protect the coop from heavy rain and water damage. The sides of the roof leave a small open space for ventilation.



Install The Chicken Coop

Pick a spot to install the coop. You can use metal fence post anchors with ground spikes to level the coop.



Tip

If you remove the roof and the door, the coop is easy to carry around with two persons.

Finish the Chicken Coop

To completely finish the coop:

- install a ramp for the birds to get in and out
- install a lock on the roof to prevent wind from lifting the roof
- paint the coop
- install the chicken coop door




Chicken Coop Paint

Don't start running to the basement to see what you have dribs and drabs of. Check our website for [chicken coop paint recommendations](#). Only use paint or oil that is safe for your birds.



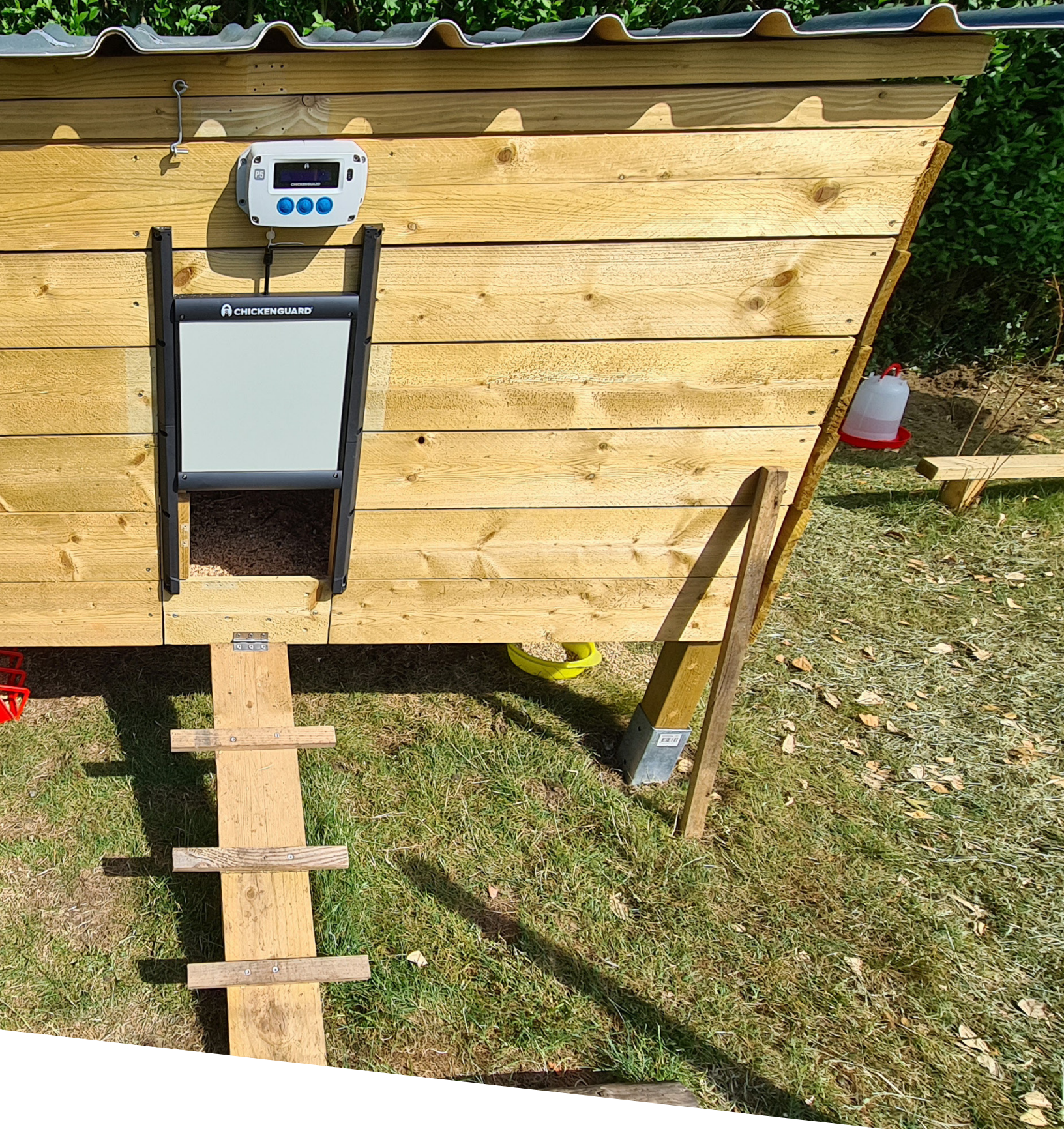
Automatic Chicken Coop Door

If you don't like to be elbowed out of bed at cock crow to let the hens out, install an automatic chicken coop door. Go to [chickenfans.com for reviews](#) and [step-by-step instructions to install an automatic chicken coop door](#).



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