



The Benefits of Owning a Halflap Henhouse

by Steve Rose

This article describes the numerous practical benefits of owning a Halflap Henhouse.



SKYLIGHT ROOF

Beneficial Sunlight: The clear skylight roof lets in plenty of beneficial sunlight for your hens. The amount of sunlight your hens receive each day encourage egg laying which is hormonal for hens and directly influenced by light levels. On average, a hen will lay between 250 and 270 eggs per year or 5 eggs per week. In other words, 5 hens will lay 25 eggs per week. Therefore, it is important to consider how many eggs you want per week when deciding how many hens you want to feed and raise. Raising too many hens will keep the feed store happy and increase maintenance.

Warmth and Visibility: The sunlight entering the skylight roof helps to warm your hens during colder weather and provides ample inside visibility. The skylight roof is transparent to most solar wavelengths, but is effectively opaque to the much longer thermal infrared wavelengths. Solar wavelengths that pass through skylight roof are absorbed by inside surfaces. The inside surfaces emit longer thermal infrared wavelengths or "heat" that cannot escape through the skylight roof. So the inside air warms up nicely and the heat is stored inside the Halflap Henhouse. When the weather is cold, your hens will like spending time in the enclosed upper level where their body heat also warms the shelter. A hen's body temperature is about 107 degrees Fahrenheit. My chickens have retained their warmth in the Halflap Henhouse throughout the winter with nighttime temperatures as low minus 15 Fahrenheit, without a heat lamp. The henhouse is an optimal size to retain the hen's natural 107-Fahrenheit body heat; a larger henhouse would unfavorably disperse the hen's body heat too far away from them to be useful for their warmth. Additionally, if you want, you can throw a blanket or tarp over the henhouse skylight roof at night to help retain heat.

Highly Portable: The Halflap Henhouse is lightweight and highly portable. So when the outdoor temperature is cold, your henhouse can be easily relocated to a sunny, warmer location. And when the outdoor temperature is warm, your henhouse can be easily relocated to a cooler, shady location to manage henhouse temperature. The skylight roof can be slid open a half inch or more for increased ventilation.

Outstanding Strength: The polycarbonate roof has outstanding impact strength. Polycarbonate is hundreds of times stronger than glass, making it nearly unbreakable. Safety glasses, helmets, DVDs, and home skylights are a few of the multitude of products made from polycarbonate.

Cedar Handle: The Western Red Cedar handle is very handy for quickly removing the skylight roof or sliding the roof on the shelter rim for quick access inside the henhouse for egg collecting, cleaning and maintenance. The Western Red Cedar handle also gives the skylight roof structural strength by serving as a roof ridge board.

GREEN SHELTER

Really Strong: The green shelter is made from high density polyethylene (HDPE). HDPE is a really strong plastic. HDPE is known for its large strength to density ratio. HDPE is commonly used to make buckets, barrels and water tanks.

Easy to Clean: One of most beneficial properties of using HDPE for the Halflap Henhouse is that virtually nothing sticks to it. Glue, for example, is commonly sold in HDPE containers, because glue will not stick to HDPE. As you can imagine, HDPE's resistance to sticking makes cleaning the Halflap Henhouse much easier. Simply remove the skylight roof and scoop out the henhouse litter with a common plastic dust pan into a bucket or barrel. Then wash up the henhouse with a wash cloth from a bucket of warm water mixed with some household dishwashing liquid. By the way, if you have a place for composting, poultry droppings are a rich fertilizer, but should be allowed to compost for a while before using.

Two Sliding Doors: The two green sliding doors add to henhouse versatility. The doors are useful for when you want to close one or both doors to keep your henhouse warmer during cold winter nights. Conversely, both sliding doors

can be removed during warm weather for ample cross ventilation through the 2 SqFt. door opening. The sliding doors are especially handy and convenient when cleaning up the shelter, because the doors can be closed to keep your hens out of the way while tidying up their room!

Weather Protection: The durable Halflap Henhouse will protect your hens from all kinds of weather. The green shelter is an optimal size enclosure to preserve hen body heat around your hens when outdoor temperatures are cold. The shelter's skylight roof also lets in sunlight for added warmth for your hens during cold weather. When outdoor temperatures are warm, the Halflap Henhouse is easy to lift and relocate to a cooler, shady spot out of the direct sunlight. Both slider doors can be opened for cross air ventilation through the shelter's 2 SqFt. door opening. In addition, the skylight roof is designed to easily slide open a half inch or more on the shelter rim to allow for more air flow in and out of the shelter. The half-lap shaped henhouse shelter is integrally connected to a heavy and strong 14 gauge welded galvanized steel 1" x 1" mesh base making the Halflap Henhouse a sturdy wind resistant structure. Also, because the Halflap Henhouse is so portable, it can be easily relocated to a safe place for your hens when weather conditions are particularly severe or stormy.

Upper Platform: The upper platform provides space for three essentials for raising chickens: nest box, feeder, and waterer. The upper platform is an ideal location for all three because: 1) The essentials are in a dry place, away from rain, wind and snow, 2) The essentials are up off the ground well away from unwelcome critters, 3) The essentials are in a spot where you can quickly glance in through the clear skylight roof to see if there are any freshly laid eggs and also see if there is enough feed and water for your hens, and 4) The essentials are all easily accessible to your hens during inclement weather when your hens may not want to venture outside. Your hens will eat more feed during colder weather to keep themselves warm.

Roosting Rods: The 3 rods are conveniently positioned over the lower platform, so when your hens roost on the roosting rods their droppings conveniently fall into the litter (such as leaves, straw or wood shavings) spread over the lower platform. Additionally, the unique configuration of Halflap Henhouse allows for 3 cantilevered roosting rods instead of one long roosting rod. You will find submerging and cleaning three 14" size rods in a bucket of water much easier to clean. The rods are easy to remove for cleaning by simply hand turning the 3 stainless steel wing nuts that hold the rods firmly in place. Furthermore, the rods are crafted from durable smooth-sawn Western Red Cedar boards. Western Red Cedar is hardy, naturally decay resistant, and one of the most durable woods.

Young Chicks: The shelter space, with both slider doors closed, is a really great space to use for young chicks. Move the Halflap Henhouse to an inside location. Start off by limiting the chicks to only the shelter space with both slider doors closed. To maintain sufficient warmth when the chicks are only a few weeks old, remove the skylight roof and hang a heat lamp safely and sufficiently high enough above the henhouse to provide the proper temperature for each week of chick growth (usually 90 to 95 degrees F for the first week). As the chicks grow and need less heat, raise the heat lamp to reduce the temperature until they no longer need the heat lamp for warmth. When the chicks have grown big enough to move up and down the ramp between the shelter space and the pen space, open just the short slider door while leaving the long slider door closed.

MESH PEN

Practical Features: The predator deterrent pen below the shelter lets in plenty of fresh air and is built with strong 14 gauge welded galvanized steel 1" x 1" mesh. The pen space is open on the bottom and is easily accessible for cleaning by simply lifting the henhouse up and moving it. Hens swiftly walk up and down the ramp between the pen and shelter. One of the nicest aspects of the steel mesh ramp is that you don't need to clean it often because the poultry droppings pass right through. By comparison, ramps that do not have a pass through surface tend to accumulate poultry droppings which are a chore to clean, especially after the droppings have dried on the ramp. Having the ramp attached to the pen sides is advantageous because the ramp never needs to be adjusted, takes up little space and does not obstruct the movement of your hens in and out of the pen. The ramp also provides your hens with a nice place to roost in the open air. It is a delightful natural sight to see the hens instinctively parade up the ramp to bed as the sun goes down, often without any need to round them up before sunset!

HOW TO RAISE CHICKENS

University & Government Educational Information: Please visit the HalflapHenhouse.com Information page for a wonderful collection of free University & Government Educational Information about raising chickens. In addition to being a pleasurable and fulfilling experience, raising chickens is an educational experience for people of all ages.

EASY TO MAKE CHICKEN WATERER

Waterer Instructions: Please visit the HalflapHenhouse.com Waterer page for easy to make chicken waterer instructions.