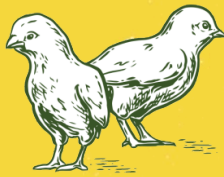




Olive Egger Chicken Breed Guide



**Breed type**

Dual-purpose (egg and meat)

Egg color

Olive green

Pen or free-range?

Both

Temperament

Mostly calm and friendly, sometimes broody

Easter Egger quick facts

Lifespan: Up to 8 years**Weight:** Females (hens): 6 lbs.; Males (roosters): 7-8 lbs.**Appearance:** Gray and black (adults) or brown and black (chicks)**Egg Production:** 150-200 eggs/year (3-5 eggs/week)**Good for Beginners:** Yes**[Shop all chickens >](#)**

Olive Egger chickens are a hybrid poultry breed that layers brown and blue eggs to produce green-colored eggs. They can also be used for meat. Learn more about this popular yet harder-to-find chicken species from Tractor Supply, America's largest rural lifestyle retailer and proud provider of numerous **poultry breeds**.

History of Olive Egger Chickens

With roots dating back to 1842, the Olive Egger breed originated when breeders started to pair **brown-egg-laying chickens** with **blue-egg-laying chickens**. The goal was to combine certain traits from each chicken to produce an adaptable and robust hybrid species, which provides olive-green eggs. The Olive Egger breed is broad and encompasses many combinations of chickens, such as:

- Ameraucana + Barnevelder
- Araucana + Barnevelder
- Legbar + Barnevelder
- Maran + Legbar
- Maran + Ameraucana
- Maran + Araucana
- Welsummer + Ameraucana
- Welsummer + Araucana
- Welsummer + Legbar
- Welsummer + Whiting True Blue

Because Olive Eggers are a hybrid breed, the American Poultry Association does not recognize them or provide standards for them.

Temperament and Good-to-Knows

Olive Egger chickens typically have a docile temperament, but owners need to be careful about which other breeds they are housed with. Here are some good things to know about Olive Eggers:

- **Average noise levels:** The loudness of individual birds will vary, but all Olive Egger chickens will be chatty from time to time. Olive Eggers who are louder likely carry Welsummer genes, but most noise levels are typical for what you'd expect in an average coop or pen of a similar size. With that being said, hybrid breeds are unpredictable and can be loud at any given time. If you have concerns about disturbing your neighbors with noise, consider a quieter breed.
- **Broody tendencies:** Olive Egger hens can be broodier than some other breeds depending on their exact genetics. Broody behavior arises as an instinct to sit on the nest constantly to protect eggs at all costs, so these hens can be aggressive – especially when attempting to **collect eggs** from the nest.
- **Socialization with other birds:** Olive Eggers are usually compatible with a wide variety of other chicken breeds. However, they should only be kept with birds that match their individual temperament and physical size. This will prevent smaller, weaker birds from getting picked on. Take special care when **introducing new chickens** to your flock.
- **Unpredictability:** As a hybrid chicken breed, Olive Eggers can have an unpredictable lineage, with numerous DNA combinations possible. This means that their egg-laying abilities, appearance and personalities will vary immensely from bird to bird.
- **Winter laying capabilities:** Unlike many other chicken breeds, Olive Eggers are known to occasionally lay eggs in the winter.

Visual and Egg Characteristics

Olive Egger chickens can sometimes vary in appearance due to the mix of their parents' breeds, but their egg characteristics are consistent across the board. Some important visual and egg characteristics of Olive Eggers include:

Physical Characteristics of Olive Eggers

The average Olive Egger chicken appears brown and black as a chick, turning to gray and black as an adult. Olive Egger hens weigh an average of six pounds, and the breed's roosters weigh between seven and eight pounds. Compared to other chicken breeds, Olive Eggers are medium-sized but may be larger if they carry Ameraucana or Maran genes. Olive Eggers are identifiable by their puffy cheeks and muffs, and some might have fluffy feathers or a pea comb.

Olive Egger Egg Production

Olive Egger hens normally produce up to three to five eggs per week, or up to 150 to 200 eggs per year. Olive Eggers lay green-colored eggs, not a mix of brown and blue eggs. When Olive Eggers lay eggs, they first lay one color, which is soon followed by a second color they lay over it. For example, initially, blue eggs may have a brown pigment as the secondary color, giving the egg a green appearance. While rare, Olive Eggers may lay brown or blue eggs on occasion, depending on the parent breeds of the individual bird.

What to Know When Raising Olive Egger Chicks

If you are raising Olive Egger chicks, the eggs they hatch from are also shades of green, ranging from light to dark to olive greens. Eggs containing chicks are rarely brown or blue, and they are usually medium or large. As chicks, Olive Egger males have white dots on their heads, and the females do not. When reaching maturity, typically 24 to 30 weeks after hatching, Olive Eggers lay their first eggs. This milestone may occur earlier or later in life, though, depending on the genes of the bird's parent species.

Health and Care

In general, all chickens are at risk for common diseases like fowl pox and coccidiosis, as well as mites and lice. Olive Egger chickens are not more or less at risk for such conditions. It's always recommended to have your birds vaccinated by a veterinarian to ensure optimal flock health. To properly care for Olive Egger chickens, consider the following:

- **Adequate enclosure and run space:** In the **coop or pen**, make sure you have at least 4 sq. ft. of space or more per bird. Outside of the enclosure, Olive Eggers love to forage and explore, so the run area should allow roughly 10 sq. ft. of space per bird.

- **Feeding:** These chickens love food and are not picky about what they're fed. Chicks should begin with a high-protein **chick starter feed**, and once they reach 16 weeks of age, they can slowly transition to an adult **layering feed**. **Poultry treats** like calcium-rich oyster shells are also ideal for Olive Eggers.
- **Nesting boxes:** Most Olive Eggers do well with standard 12"x12"x12" **nesting boxes**, though some birds could require extra space if they are broody.
- **Space for free-ranging:** This breed thrives when grazing and exploring, feeding on beneficial nutrients while removing weeds and insects. Ensure enough space for your Olive Eggers to free range, which will keep them occupied and prevent birds from bothering each other.
- **Temperature:** In most cases, Olive Eggers can tolerate a variety of climates, from cold and dry to hot and humid. Remember to protect chickens from extreme heat with fresh water, shade and coop ventilation. In the winter, invest in a coop heater and ensure they have drinking water that hasn't frozen solid.

Frequently Asked Questions About Olive Eggers

What makes Olive Egger chickens good for beginners?

These chickens are usually calm and docile, making for good companions as well as productive egg layers. If desired, Olive Eggers can also be raised for meat purposes. Their versatility also extends to their ability to thrive in various climates across the country.

Are Olive Eggers a type of Easter Egger?

These breeds are both hybrids that lay colorful eggs, but they are different types of chickens. **Easter Egger** chickens lay eggs of several colors, while Olive Eggers almost always lay eggs with green hues. However, depending on the parent breeds of the individual bird, an Olive Egger hen might rarely lay blue or brown eggs.

How old are Olive Eggers when they begin laying eggs?

Egg production begins at about five months of age, although it can occur anywhere between 24 and 30 weeks of age in most cases. Younger chickens may lay smaller eggs as they continue to grow. Learn more with **Tractor Supply's chicken egg FAQs** or other resources in **The Coop**.

Where can I purchase Olive Egger chickens?

Find Olive Egger chickens for sale at Tractor Supply. Backed by over 85 years of experience, Tractor Supply is proud to be America's go-to destination for **live chickens**. To receive your chickens as soon as possible, order online or visit our stores.

What are the characteristics of Olive Egger chicken eggs?

Olive Egger chicks hatch from eggs in different shades of green, from light to dark to olive. Seldom will eggs with chicks be blue or brown. Eggs with chicks are also typically medium or large.

How many eggs do Olive Egger chickens produce?

Olive Egger hens usually produce 150 to 200 eggs each year, which is three to five per week.

Find Everything Your Flock Needs at Tractor Supply

Whether you're a first-time chicken owner or an experienced flock leader, the Olive Egger breed has a lot to offer. From offering top **poultry feeds** to advice for **collecting and storing fresh eggs**, Tractor Supply is here to help you live your Life Out Here to the fullest. To shop for Olive Egger birds or poultry supplies, place an order with us online or **visit your local Tractor Supply store**.