



CHICKEN DUST BATH PAN

Chickens take dust baths for several reasons, the most important of which is hygiene and parasite control. The dust gets into their feathers and skin and absorbs the oil and dead skin cells that parasites feed on. The dust can also suffocate parasites like mites and lice. Other reasons for dust baths include socializing (they sometimes bathe as a group, making it a social activity), cooling down in hot weather, and even for stress relief and relaxation. Additionally, the baths help reduce boredom and help prevent them from pecking each other.

The Little Giant® Chicken Dust Bath Pan is ideal for this purpose. Chickens will typically dig shallow holes in the ground and roll around in the dirt, but this pan will give them a place to have a dust bath without needing to dig holes. The pan can also be used when the weather would prevent a chicken from digging a hole to create a natural dirt bath, such as in the winter.

The Little Giant® Chicken Bath Pan features drainage holes to prevent dust bath materials from becoming wet and clumping.



PREPARING A PAN FOR A CHICKEN DUST BATH

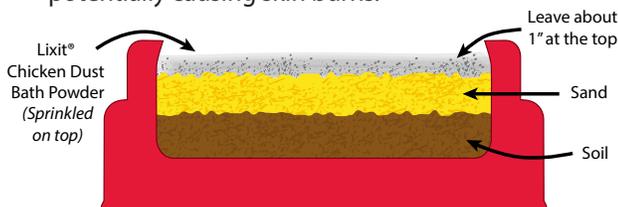
How to create a clean, inviting dust bath that supports your chickens' natural behaviors and contributes to their overall well-being:

1. Prepare the container

- **Cleanliness:** Thoroughly clean the container to remove any dirt or chemicals that could be harmful to your chickens.
- **Placement:**
 - Position the dust bath in a dry, easily accessible area where your chickens feel safe and are likely to use it.
 - Consider placing it under an elevated coop or cover (like a tarp or umbrella) if rain is frequent.
 - Avoid areas too close to feeders or waterers to prevent contamination.

2. Prepare the dust bath materials

- **Foundation:**
 - Start with a base of dry, loose **soil**. Bagged peat moss works well. Avoid soil treated with fertilizers or chemicals.
 - Add a layer of **all-purpose sand** (also known as contractor's or construction sand). Avoid play sand, as its fine texture can be easily inhaled and potentially lead to respiratory problems.
 - Clean **wood ash** from untreated wood can also be added to help control external parasites like mites and lice. If the dust bath gets wet, replace the mixture, as wood ash combined with water can form lye, potentially causing skin burns.



- **Top with a sprinkle of Diatomaceous Earth** (food grade) or **Lixit® Chicken Dust Bath Powder**. This also helps control pests, but it's important to use it sparingly, as the fine dust can irritate lungs if inhaled.
- **Optional Additive: Dried Herbs.** Consider adding dried herbs like lavender, mint, or rosemary, which can deter pests and provide a pleasant scent.
- **IMPORTANT:** A common starting point is a 1:1 ratio of dirt to all-purpose sand/ash, with only a light sprinkle of Diatomaceous Earth or Dust Bath Powder on top of that.

3. Fill the pan

- **Level:** Fill the container to about 1 inch from the top, leaving enough space for the chickens to dig and roll without spilling too much of the material.

4. Maintenance

- **Regular Cleaning:** Sift out droppings and debris from the dust bath regularly with a small-tine fork.
- **Replenish Materials:**
 - Fluff the material weekly and add more dry ingredients as needed.
 - Completely replace the mixture every few months or if it becomes damp or compacted. A clean, dry mixture will keep your chickens healthy and encourage regular use.

By following these steps, you've created an essential part of a healthy coop environment. Your chickens now have a safe and satisfying way to stay clean, healthy, and happy. Keep an eye on the bath's condition and refresh it as needed—your flock will thank you!

