

Bake your own pecking balls

Pecking blocks and balls are a great way to keep chickens entertained and healthy. But they can be expensive – and the hens polish them off pretty quickly! Try making your own instead...



Ingredients: (for around 8 pecking balls)

- 1 mug layers pellets
- 1 mug mixed corn
- 1 mug mixed grit
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons plain flour

Plus a few handfuls/ spoonfuls of any combination of the following:

- Dried mealworms or other insects
- Sweetcorn
- Small chunks of apple
- Chick crumb or layers mash
- Sunflower seeds
- Oats
- Peanut butter

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to gas mark 2/ 325 F/160 C
2. Mix everything together in large bowl and leave it to sit for 5 minutes to get stickier.
3. Wet your hands and roll the mixture into balls – add a little water if it isn't sticky enough or some more flour if it is too wet.
4. Add loops of wire to the balls if you want to hang them or leave them as-is for chicken footballs! Place them in paper cupcake cases in a muffin tin. Alternatively you can shape the mixture around metal skewers for chicken kebabs or press it into cookie cutters for shapes.
5. Bake for 40 minutes or until the balls are solid. Leave to cool.
6. Watch your chickens enjoy their treats.