

HOW A SHOWROOM IS LAID OUT

What you see when you walk into the showroom.

How It's All Laid Out

Poultry shows, big and small, are generally open to three types of fowl recognized by the American Poultry Association and the American Bantam Association. Turkeys and waterfowl are shown at most shows, but we will focus on chickens here as they are by far the most common type of fowl at most shows.

It may appear at first glance that there are wall to wall chickens in no particular order. However, someone has worked hard to organize the birds. The pattern may not be apparent, but once you know what you are looking at, it will start to make sense.

Large Fowl or Bantam ??

The first thing you may notice is that there are very large birds and very small birds. You might even notice that some look almost identical except for the size. The small birds are known as bantams, sometimes called "banties". A few types of birds come only in large fowl or bantam, but most can be either. The relationship is similar to "toy" or miniature dogs and their "normal" size counterparts. The goal is to have virtually the same birds, except for size. Typically large fowl will weigh in at 9 to 12 pounds while a bantam will weigh 1 1/2 to 3 pounds. Large fowl are the standard size for a chicken, but bantams are popular because they are smaller, easier to handle, take up less space, eat less food and still provide many of the benefits of owning chickens. In the show, large fowl and bantams will be shown separately.

Class

The next thing you may notice is that birds are broken down into classes. For large fowl, the classes are named after the area of origin. You will notice an American Class, Asiatic Class, English Class, Mediterranean Class, Continental Class and an All Other Standard Breed Class. For bantams, classes are named after physical characteristics. These include Game Bantams, Single Comb-Clean Legged (S.C.C.L.), Rose Comb Clean Legged (R.C.C.L.), All Other Comb Clean Legged (A.O.C.C.L.), and Feather Legged Classes. Every breed will be listed in one and only one class.

Breed

Within each class will be several breeds. Each breed will have specific characteristic (s) that differentiate it from all other breeds. One example of a breed is the Brahma and a Silkie or a Rhode Island Red and a Leghorn. Breeds will differ in shape, feather characteristics, comb and other attributes. Some breeds originated for meat production, some for egg production, others originated from Asian or European fighting cock stocks, while a few breeds were developed for ornamental qualities. The *Standard of Perfection* will provide information on breeds, their characteristics and history.

Variety

If you look at a breed you will find that there are often many color patterns represented. Both large and bantam Plymouth Rocks are recognized in the *Standard* in Barred, White, Buff, Silver Penciled, Partridge, Columbian, and Blue varieties. The black variety was recently admitted, but for Plymouth Rock bantams only. Each of these varieties has distinctive traits that set it apart from other varieties. You may find some of the same varieties appearing in a number of breeds, for example, there are also Buff Brahmas, Buff Cochins, Buff Orpington, Buff Silkies as well as a few other breeds. The *Standard of Perfection* will list the characteristics of each variety.