

anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker

Anyone Can Build a Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker: A Practical Guide to DIY Poultry Processing

anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker, and believe it or not, it's easier than you might think. Whether you're a small-scale farmer, a homesteader, or just someone interested in making your poultry processing more efficient, this DIY project can save you time, effort, and even money. Mechanical chicken pluckers speed up the tedious process of removing feathers, allowing you to prepare birds quickly and cleanly. In this guide, we'll explore how you can create your own tub-style plucker, the materials you'll need, and practical tips to get the best results.

Why Consider Building a Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker?

The traditional method of plucking chickens by hand is time-consuming and physically demanding. For those who raise multiple birds, especially during processing season, manual plucking can become a bottleneck. The tub style mechanical chicken plucker offers a simple yet effective solution. It uses a rotating drum lined with rubber fingers designed to remove feathers quickly without damaging the skin.

Benefits of a DIY Tub Style Chicken Plucker

Before diving into the construction details, it's useful to understand why building your own plucker can be a great choice:

- **Cost-Effective:** Buying commercial chicken pluckers can be expensive, often running into hundreds of dollars. Building your own tub style plucker from readily available materials drastically reduces these costs.
- **Customization:** You can tailor the size and power of your plucker to fit the number of birds you process and your workspace.
- **Learning Experience:** Constructing this machine is a practical project that enhances your DIY skills and deepens your understanding of poultry processing.
- **Efficiency:** Mechanical pluckers can remove feathers from a bird in under a minute, which is a huge time-saver compared to manual plucking.

Understanding How a Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker Works

At its core, a tub style chicken plucker consists of a circular tub with rubber fingers attached inside. This tub rotates, powered by a motor or drill attachment. When you place a freshly scalded bird inside, the rotating fingers rub against the feathers, loosening and removing them effectively.

The Key Components

- **The Tub:** Usually made from metal or heavy-duty plastic, the tub holds the bird and the rubber fingers.
- **Rubber Fingers:** These are the flexible, finger-like protrusions that do the actual plucking.
- **Motor or Drill:** Provides the rotational force to spin the tub.
- **Frame or Stand:** Supports the tub and motor safely during operation.

Materials and Tools Needed to Build Your Own Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker

Knowing the materials in advance helps you plan and budget accordingly. Most of the components are accessible from hardware stores or can be repurposed from other equipment.

Materials

- **Plastic or Metal Tub:** A 24 to 30-inch diameter tub works well for processing standard-sized chickens.
- **Rubber Plucker Fingers:** These can be purchased online or made from rubber hose pieces.
- **Motor or Electric Drill:** A 1/2 to 1 HP motor or a heavy-duty drill with a speed reducer is ideal.
- **Wood or Metal Frame:** To hold the tub securely and keep it stable while spinning.
- **Bolts, Screws, and Fasteners:** For assembling parts.
- **Rubber or Plastic Sheets:** Optional for lining the tub bottom to protect the bird's skin.

Tools

- Drill and drill bits
- Screwdrivers
- Wrench or socket set
- Jigsaw or metal cutter (depending on tub material)
- Measuring tape
- Clamps

Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker

Step 1: Prepare the Tub

Select a sturdy tub that can withstand rotation and occasional impacts. If necessary, cut holes for mounting the motor shaft or for attaching the tub to the frame. Drill evenly spaced holes around the inner wall of the tub to insert the rubber fingers. These should be secure but removable if you want to replace the fingers later.

Step 2: Attach the Rubber Fingers

Insert the rubber fingers into the holes. The fingers should be flexible enough to remove feathers but firm enough to avoid slipping out during operation. If you're making your own fingers from rubber hose, cut them into approximately 3-4 inch segments and slit one end to create a gripping flange.

Step 3: Build the Frame

Construct a stable frame to hold the tub at a comfortable working height. Use wood or metal, depending on your tools and skill level. Make sure the frame is sturdy enough to handle the rotation without wobbling.

Step 4: Install the Motor or Drill Attachment

Mount the motor securely on the frame, aligning it with the tub's center shaft. If you're using a drill, create a coupling system so the drill can spin the tub efficiently. Ensure all connections are tight to avoid slippage or accidents.

Step 5: Test the Rotation

Before placing any birds inside, run the plucker empty to check for smooth rotation and stability. Adjust the alignment if necessary to prevent wobbling or uneven spinning.

Step 6: Process Your First Bird

After scalding your chicken in hot water (around 145°F to 150°F) for 30-60 seconds, place it inside the spinning tub. Run the plucker for 30-60 seconds until feathers are removed. Remove the bird and inspect - most feathers should come off cleanly.

Tips for Optimizing Your Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker

Building your own chicken plucker is just the beginning. Here are some tips to make your plucking process as smooth and effective as possible:

- **Scald Properly:** Adequate scalding softens the feathers, making them easier to remove. Avoid overheating, as this can damage the skin.
- **Don't Overload:** Pluck one bird at a time to ensure thorough feather removal.
- **Maintain Your Rubber Fingers:** Over time, fingers may wear out or tear. Replace them regularly to keep performance consistent.
- **Secure Your Setup:** Keep the plucker on a non-slip surface and ensure the frame is stable to prevent accidents.
- **Consider a Drainage System:** Adding a drain hole can make clean-up easier after plucking.

Common Challenges and How to Overcome Them

While anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker, a few common issues might arise:

Wobbling Tub

If your tub wobbles during rotation, check the alignment of the motor shaft and the tub's center. Reinforce the frame or add balancing weights if necessary.

Rubber Fingers Falling Out

Ensure the holes in the tub are the correct size and the fingers fit snugly. Consider using washers or clips to secure them.

Insufficient Feather Removal

This can result from inadequate scalding or worn rubber fingers. Adjust scalding time and replace fingers when worn.

Expanding Your DIY Poultry Processing Setup

Once you have your tub style mechanical chicken plucker up and running, you might want to explore other helpful homemade tools for your poultry operation. For example, building a simple scalding tank, a sturdy processing table, or a cleaning station can complement your plucker. These additions help streamline the entire process, making it safer and more efficient.

Moreover, sharing your experience with local farming communities or online forums can help others learn about building their own pluckers. The DIY approach to poultry processing fosters a spirit of self-reliance and innovation.

Anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker, and by doing so, you empower yourself to handle poultry processing with confidence and ease. With some basic tools, a bit of patience, and a willingness to learn, this practical machine can become an indispensable part of your homestead or farming routine.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

A tub style mechanical chicken plucker is a device designed to remove feathers from poultry quickly and efficiently. It typically consists of a rotating drum or tub lined with rubber fingers that pluck the feathers as the bird is tumbled inside.

Can anyone build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker at home?

Yes, with basic mechanical skills, access to tools, and materials like rubber fingers, a motor, and a tub, most people can build a functional tub style mechanical chicken plucker at home.

What materials are needed to build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

Common materials include a large plastic or metal tub, rubber fingers for plucking, an electric motor, a rotating shaft, a frame to hold the components, and some hardware like bolts and screws.

How much does it typically cost to build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

The cost can vary but generally ranges from \$50 to \$200 depending on the quality of materials, motor power, and whether parts like rubber fingers are purchased or homemade.

Are there safety concerns when building or using a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

Yes, safety is important. Ensure the motor is properly enclosed, avoid loose clothing near moving parts, and never operate the plucker without supervision to prevent injuries.

What skills are helpful for building a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

Basic mechanical skills, knowledge of electric motors, ability to use hand and power tools, and some understanding of poultry processing are helpful.

Where can I find plans or tutorials to build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker?

Many online resources, including YouTube tutorials, DIY farming forums, and agricultural extension websites, offer free plans and step-by-step guides.

How effective is a homemade tub style mechanical chicken plucker compared to commercial models?

A well-built homemade tub plucker can be very effective for small-scale use, though commercial models may offer faster processing, durability, and additional features.

Can the tub style mechanical chicken plucker be used for other poultry besides chickens?

Yes, it can generally be used for other similarly sized poultry like ducks and turkeys, though adjustments to motor speed and plucker fingers may be necessary.

Additional Resources

****Build Your Own Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker: A Practical Guide****

anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker, a fact that has intrigued backyard poultry enthusiasts, small-scale farmers, and DIY hobbyists alike. This accessible piece of equipment, essential for efficient poultry processing, can be constructed with basic materials and tools, combining functionality with cost-effectiveness. As demand for homegrown poultry rises alongside interest in sustainable living, understanding the mechanics and construction of a tub style mechanical chicken plucker becomes increasingly relevant.

Understanding the Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker

A tub style chicken plucker is a machine designed to automate the otherwise labor-intensive task of feather removal from poultry. Traditionally, plucking chickens by hand is time-consuming and physically demanding; the mechanical plucker simplifies this step, improving processing speed and consistency. The "tub style" refers to the circular basin—usually a large tub or drum—equipped with rubber fingers that rotate to remove feathers efficiently.

The design is straightforward yet effective. Typically, the tub rotates, powered by an electric motor or a drill, while flexible rubber fingers affixed to the inner surface gently pull feathers away from the bird. This mechanism minimizes skin damage and reduces processing time significantly compared to manual plucking.

Why Build Instead of Buy?

While commercial chicken pluckers are available, many small producers and homesteaders find the price prohibitive. A basic tub style mechanical chicken plucker can cost several hundred dollars, which may not be justifiable for occasional use. Building one from readily available materials offers several advantages:

- **Cost savings:** Materials like a plastic tub, rubber fingers, and a motor can be sourced inexpensively.
- **Customization:** Builders can adjust size and capacity according to their flock size.
- **Learning opportunity:** The process provides insight into poultry processing and mechanical design.

Moreover, the modular nature of the design allows for easy repairs and upgrades, extending the machine's lifespan.

Essential Components and Materials

Anyone embarking on building a tub style mechanical chicken plucker should consider the following key components:

The Tub

The tub acts as the primary chamber where the plucking occurs. Common choices include large plastic tubs, barrels, or even metal drums, typically measuring 24 to 30 inches in diameter to accommodate standard-sized chickens. The tub must be durable and water-resistant, as the plucker operates with water to loosen feathers.

Rubber Fingers

These are the crucial elements responsible for feather removal. Usually made from soft, flexible rubber, fingers are mounted evenly inside the tub's wall. They must be spaced correctly to ensure efficient plucking without damaging the bird's skin. Commercially available rubber fingers can be purchased, or builders can repurpose rubber tubing or mats for a DIY approach.

Rotational Mechanism

Powering the tub's rotation is the heart of the plucker's functionality. Options range from electric motors (commonly 1/3 to 1/2 horsepower) to repurposed drill motors or even hand-crank systems for manual operation. The chosen motor should provide consistent torque and rotation speed, generally between 120 to 180 revolutions per minute (RPM), optimal for effective feather removal.

Frame and Base

A sturdy frame supports the tub and motor assembly. Builders often use wood or metal frames, ensuring stability during operation. The base should be elevated to allow water drainage and ease of use.

Step-by-Step Construction Overview

Building a tub style mechanical chicken plucker involves several stages, each critical to the machine's efficiency and safety:

1. **Select and prepare the tub:** Drill holes for mounting the rubber fingers evenly around the tub's inner circumference.
2. **Attach rubber fingers:** Secure fingers firmly to withstand rotational forces while maintaining flexibility.

3. **Construct the frame:** Build a stable support structure that holds the tub and motor securely.
4. **Install the motor:** Mount the motor with a pulley or direct drive system to the tub's base, ensuring smooth rotation.
5. **Test rotation and safety features:** Run the plucker empty to check for wobbling or uneven rotation; add safety guards as necessary.
6. **Trial run with poultry:** Process a test bird to evaluate plucking effectiveness and adjust finger placement or motor speed accordingly.

Safety Considerations

Safety during construction and operation should not be overlooked. Protective guards around moving parts, waterproof electrical connections, and secure mounting are vital. Additionally, users should avoid loose clothing or jewelry when operating the plucker and always supervise the machine while in use.

Performance and Efficiency

When constructed properly, a tub style mechanical chicken plucker can remove feathers from a single bird in less than 30 seconds, a vast improvement over manual plucking which can take several minutes per bird. This efficiency not only saves time but also reduces fatigue, allowing producers to process larger flocks with less effort.

Comparatively, commercial pluckers may offer additional features such as larger capacities or automated water sprays, but the DIY tub style plucker's simplicity and adaptability make it a practical solution for many users.

Maintenance and Longevity

Routine maintenance involves inspecting the rubber fingers for wear and replacing them as needed, lubricating the motor and rotating components, and cleaning the tub after each use to prevent bacterial buildup. With proper care, a homemade plucker can serve reliably for several years.

Expanding the Design: Variations and Improvements

The basic tub style mechanical chicken plucker design allows for several enhancements:

- **Size scaling:** Larger tubs can process multiple birds simultaneously but require more

powerful motors.

- **Motor options:** Battery-powered or solar-compatible motors can increase portability for remote locations.
- **Automation:** Adding timers or water sprays can improve user convenience and plucking quality.
- **Material upgrades:** Using stainless steel tubs and frames can enhance durability and hygiene.

Experimenting with these adaptations can tailor the plucker to specific needs, whether for hobbyists or small-scale commercial operations.

The Broader Impact of DIY Mechanical Chicken Pluckers

The growing interest in home poultry processing aligns with trends favoring food self-sufficiency and sustainable agriculture. By demonstrating that anyone can build a tub style mechanical chicken plucker, this approach empowers individuals to reduce reliance on commercial processors, lower costs, and gain greater control over their food supply chain.

Furthermore, the educational value of constructing such equipment fosters a deeper understanding of agricultural machinery and encourages innovation within small farming communities.

Ultimately, the accessibility of building a tub style mechanical chicken plucker underscores the potential for practical, cost-effective solutions in agricultural technology. With readily available materials and a clear understanding of mechanical principles, even those without advanced technical skills can enhance their poultry processing capabilities significantly.

[Anyone Can Build A Tub Style Mechanical Chicken Plucker](#)

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Flock, Revised Edition Harvey Ussery, 2022-11-01 The most comprehensive book on how to raise and breed your own poultry flock is now fully updated and expanded “The ultimate book for those who want to know everything there is to know about raising poultry.”—Gene Logsdon, author of *Letter to a Young Farmer* “There’s no better introductory reference on the joy of home-raising chickens.”—Booklist The first edition of *The Small-Scale Poultry Flock* helped thousands of small-scale farmers and homesteaders successfully adopt a practical and integrative model for working with chickens and other domestic fowl based on natural systems. In this expanded and thoroughly revised edition, readers will find plenty of all-new material. Author Harvey Ussery introduces readers to his new favorite breed of chicken, Icelandics; describes how he manages his breeding flock using a clan mating system; presents detailed information on the use of trapnests and record-keeping spreadsheets for evaluating breeding hen performance; and provides step-by-step instructions for construction of an ingeniously designed mobile poultry shelter. Readers will also find fully updated information and tips on all aspects of flock management, including:

- Growing (and sourcing) feed on a small scale
- Cultivating earthworms and grubs as high-protein poultry feed
- Brooding (and breeding) at home
- Implementing manure management
- Using electric net fencing for ranging flocks
- Using poultry as insect and weed managers in the garden and orchard
- Enlisting your chickens as garden tillers and compost-makers
- Protecting the flock from predators
- Keeping the flock healthy
- Working with mother hens

Ussery presents a sustainable and ecologically friendly model that can be adapted for use at a variety of scales. His advice and examples throughout the book will prove invaluable for beginner homesteaders, growers looking to incorporate poultry into their farm, or experienced flocksters seeking to close their loop.

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extensive information on: The definition of an integrated poultry flock (imitation of natural systems, integrating patterns, and closing the circle) Everything you need to know about your basic chicken (including distinctive points about anatomy and behavior that are critical to management) Extended information on poultry health and holistic health care, with a focus on prevention Planning your flock (flock size, choosing breeds, fowl useful for egg vs. meat production, sourcing stock) How to breed and brood the flock (including breeding for genetic conservation), including the most complete guide to working with broody hens available anywhere Making and mixing your own feed (with tips on equipment, storage, basic ingredients, technique, grinding and mixing) Providing more of the flock's feed from sources grown or self-foraged on the homestead or farm, including production of live protein feeds using earthworms and soldier grubs Using poultry to increase soil fertility, control crop damaging insects, and to make compost-including systems for pasturing and for tillage of cover crops and weeds Recipes for great egg and poultry dishes (including Ussery's famous chicken stock!) And one of the best step-by-step poultry butchering guides available, complete with extensive illustrative photos. No other book on raising poultry takes an entirely whole-systems approach, or discusses producing homegrown feed and breeding in such detail. This is a truly invaluable guide that will lead farmers and homesteaders into a new world of self-reliance and enjoyment.

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management basics; Implement basic, uncomplicated food processing, including large and small animal butchering and cheese making; and Integrate grass, gardens, and livestock to minimize or eliminate the need for off-farm inputs. As the Doughertys write, more and more people today are feeling “the desire for clean, affordable food, unmodified, unprocessed, and unmedicated and the security of local food sourcing for ourselves and our children.” The Independent Farmstead is a must-have resource for those who count themselves as part of this movement: both new and prospective farmers and homesteaders, and those who are interested in switching to grass-based systems. Best of all it’s the kind of rare how-to book that the authors themselves view not as a compendium of one-size-fits-all instructions but as “the beginning of a conversation,” one that is utterly informative, sincere, and inspiring.

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