

How to... get started in the great sport of **Pigeon Racing**

Thoroughbred pigeon racing is practised all over the world. If you would like to make a start, here's a handy guide from Pigeon Racing Victoria Inc.



For more information including advice
or mentoring please visit:
www.pigeonracingvictoria.com



The Loft

Like any other creature racing pigeons require a home in which they feel safe and secure and can be healthy. It doesn't have to be elaborate. Even a garden shed can be modified to serve as a simple loft. The main aspect is for the loft to be dry and to have good ventilation as birds require more oxygen than other creatures.

The entrance needs to be as high as possible above the ground to minimise the chance of chance of a cat getting in. The loft also needs to have a means of allowing the birds to enter but not come out again until you release them. This is achieved with a simple landing board and "bob wires" covering the entrance.

When pigeons are trained well they do not stray outside sitting on house roofs. When let out they should either be flying, on the loft or in front of the loft. This is achieved by never letting them out of the loft after being fed. They should always be let out when hungry and that way they can be called in as required without picking up bad habits.



Breeding

In order to breed each pair must have their own nest box and bowl to lay eggs and raise their young. Two eggs are laid and both parents incubate and raise their young.

A life registration ring needs to be placed on babies when six days old. When the youngster is twenty five days old it is ready to be weaned and the parents will be on their next nest. It is important that a high protein diet and calcium cake is fed at this time as young pigeons grow very quickly.



Feeding

Feeding a good mixture ensures the birds are in good health.

They also require grit to help them digest the grain like all birds. Clean water is also required. In hot weather or when raising young pigeons drink a lot more.



Racing

The race season begins in July in Australia in most states. Before birds are entered in a race they must be trained. This involves releasing them at increasing distances away from their loft. This encourages them to fly straight home and gets them fit. Races can be from 200 kms to 1200 kms.



Technology

As with all aspects of life technology has brought about changes and pigeon racing is no exception.

The traditional method of timing pigeons from races is for the bird to carry a race rubber on its leg and for this to be put into a clock to register the time of arrival. The modern method requires the bird to carry a microchip on its ring which records its arrival when it passes over a pad at the loft. This records and calculates the velocity. This allows the owner to do other things like shopping whilst the pigeon is recorded. The traditional method of timing is however still used by many.