

Hatching Times

Various Poultry Breeds

While chickens take 21 days to hatch, not all poultry are the same. Emus can take up to 8 weeks. It is important to know how long they take as all eggs must be turned regularly until just before hatching.

The carer (the male bird in some instances) turns the eggs many times a day. This is to move the embryo so that it gets fresh nutrients from the albumen (clear part of the egg) and prevent it from sticking to the side of the egg.

Just prior to hatching, the chick penetrates the air sac in the blunt end of the egg and begins breathing inside the shell. The shell is porous and good and bad gases are exchanged through the shell. Excessive movement at this stage could dislodge the chick's beak from the air sac and cause suffocation.

The carer instinctively knows when to stop turning the eggs prior to hatching. Clever?

The list below shows the hatching times for the more popular breeds of poultry and the time at which turning of the eggs should stop.

Breed	Incubation Times	Turn Till Day
Chickens	21	18
Bantams	20-21	18
Ducks	28	25
Muscovy Ducks	33-35	31
Turkeys	28	25
Geese	28	25
Guinea Fowl	27	24
Pea Fowl	26-28	25
Partridge	24	21
Pheasant	24	21
Quail	17	14
Ostrich	42	38
Emu	54-58	50