



**STEPS &
CHECKLIST FOR
SUCCESSFUL
INCUBATION WITH
DUCK EGGS**

Heritage Club Stables



Steps for a Successful Incubation with Duck Eggs

These are the steps I've taken to have very successful hatch rates:

(As a reminder, these are the steps I take with my homemade incubator. You can see the details of that incubator [here](#).)

1. Clean and disinfect the incubator thoroughly
2. Plug in the incubator and turn the thermostat so both lights come on.
3. Place an accurate thermometer in the center of the incubator at about egg level. Double check a thermometer's accuracy by placing two thermometers in the incubator.
4. Adjust the 2 thermostats continually until the thermometer reads between 100-102° consistently! It will need to remain consistent for at least 2 days before putting in the eggs.
5. When you feel the 2 thermostats are fairly balanced, and that the temperature is fairly accurate, you can put the eggs in.
6. You can put the eggs in for 3 consecutive days (1 dozen per day) so that the ducks are not hatching all at the same time.
7. Mark the eggs on one side with an X. This is to help make sure that you've turned all the eggs over during each turning. Use permanent marker to mark the X on the eggs.
8. Once the eggs are placed, follow these steps:
 - a. Turn the eggs at least 4 times a day (Morning, Noon, Dinner, Bedtime)
 - b. When turning, place all the X's down on one turn and then all the X's up on the next turn.
 - c. The humidity needs to be kept around 50-60%. This aids in breaking down the calcium of the eggshell. Spray the eggs with water when the eggs are turned. And a pan of water and a sponge can help keep the humidity up.
 - d. If you choose to candle the eggs you will candle them at one week and again on the 16th day. Any eggs that are clear are discarded. You will see a spider looking center with veins on the 7th day and on the 16th day, the eggs that are doing well are dark and have an air pocket on the big end of the egg.
 - e. Always immediately remove any eggs that begin to ooze or smell bad.
 - f. Watch the temperatures closely! As the ducks grow, their body heat will begin to affect the temperature. The thermostats will most likely need to be turned down to accommodate for this.

- g. If you find that the temperature has spiked, immediately open up and spray the eggs. This will cool them down until the temperature has been regulated again.
- h. On the 25th day, add a wet towel to the bottom and place the eggs on top. Do this quickly and carefully so the eggs don't cool down or break. Place the big ends towards the window. Spray the eggs and close the incubator for the remaining days. This is called "lock down". The humidity should be around 80% at the time of hatching.
- i. The Incubator should only be opened up to spray the eggs or add water to the pans and towel to keep the humidity up.
- j. Open air vents for ventilation and to cool it down
- k. The ducklings should remain in the incubator for 15-24 hours as it dries off
- l. Then after 24 hours the ducklings should be removed from the incubator and placed in a box with a light for warmth and food and water.