

# How to Hatch Chickens in an Incubator

Hatching chickens in an incubator can be a fascinating and educational project! Here's a step-by-step guide tailored for you, MARION, to ensure a successful hatch.

## Step 1: Gather Your Supplies

Before you start, make sure you have everything you need:

- An incubator
- Fertilized chicken eggs
- Hygrometer (to measure humidity)
- Thermometer (to measure temperature)
- Water
- Egg turner (optional but recommended)

## Step 2: Set Up the Incubator

1. **Choose a Location:** Find a stable, warm, and dry place for your incubator. It should be out of direct sunlight and away from drafts.
2. **Clean the Incubator:** Before using it, disinfect the incubator to prevent bacteria and disease.
3. **Set the Temperature:** Preheat the incubator to about 99.5°F (37.5°C). This is crucial for healthy embryo development.
4. **Set the Humidity:** The humidity level should be around 50-55% for the first 18 days and then increase to 65-70% for the last few days before hatching.

## Step 3: Prepare the Eggs

1. **Choose Fertile Eggs:** Make sure the eggs are from a healthy flock and are fresh (not older than 7 days).
2. **Let Them Rest:** Place the eggs pointy end down in the incubator to let them acclimate for a few hours before starting the incubation process.

## Step 4: Incubation Process

1. **Egg Turning:** If your incubator has an automatic turner, it will do this for you. If not, you should turn the eggs manually at least three times a day to ensure even heat distribution.
2. **Monitor Conditions:** Regularly check the temperature and humidity levels, making adjustments as necessary.

## Step 5: Hatching Time

1. **Lockdown (Days 18-21):** Stop turning the eggs and increase humidity as mentioned earlier.
2. **Watch for Pipping:** On around day 21, the chicks will start breaking through the shells (pipping).

Keep an eye on them but don't open the incubator too often.

## **Step 6: Caring for the Chicks**

Once the chicks hatch, they will need warmth, food, and water:

- Place them in a brooder box with a heat source (like a heat lamp).
- Provide chick starter feed and fresh water.
- Keep the brooder clean and ensure the temperature is kept around 95°F (35°C) for the first week.

## **Conclusion**

With a little patience and care, you can successfully hatch chickens in an incubator! This can be a fun learning experience and a rewarding project. Good luck!