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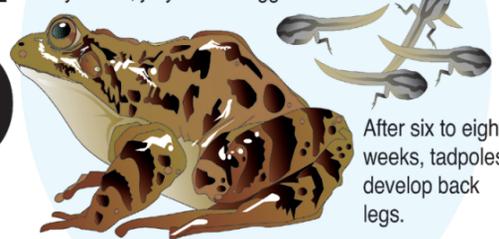
WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

EGGS



Frogs, toads, newts and salamanders are amphibians. Most lay round, jelly-coated eggs.



After six to eight weeks, tadpoles develop back legs.

A frog can lay up to 1,000 eggs at a time, but only a few will survive to adulthood. Most are eaten by predators.

Did you know?

Kiwis lay the largest eggs in relation to their body size of any species of bird.

Duck eggs are higher in fat and better for baking.

Chicken eggs are generally used instead of duck or turkey eggs because chickens lay more eggs.

They also need less nesting space and don't have the strong mothering instincts of turkeys and ducks, which makes egg collection easier.

The breed of chicken determines the color of the eggshell. Commercial eggs are brown or white, but some breeds lay blue, green or pink eggs.

Brown chicken eggs are more expensive because the hens that lay them are larger and require more feed.

An average hen lays 300 to 325 eggs per year.

Farmers in the United States produce 100 billion eggs each year.

Alligator eggs are incubated by the heat of the sun.

An alligator may lay 50 to 60 eggs in a nest.

When they hatch, most reptiles, birds and monotremes have a special **egg tooth** that helps them break out of the shell.



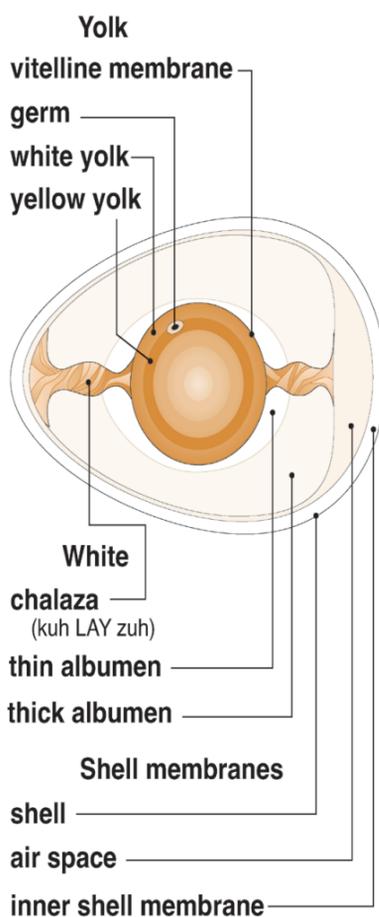
Peacock nest and eggs

The basics

Almost all animals make eggs in order to reproduce. In mammals, the egg usually stays inside the mother's body until the young are ready to be born, but many creatures, like birds, most reptiles, insects and fish, lay their eggs.

All eggs start as tiny cells that, if fertilized, will grow into baby animals. When birds, reptiles and insects mate, the eggs are fertilized inside the female. Most amphibians, fish and mollusks fertilize their eggs outside the mother.

Eggs are high nutritious, and many animals eat them (including humans). Eggs contain **lutein**, which helps prevent cataracts and muscle degeneration. Egg yolks are one of the few foods that naturally contain Vitamin D.



Comparing egg sizes

Animal egg sizes vary dramatically, ranging from the tiny egg of the bee hummingbird to the massive ostrich egg. These egg examples are drawn to scale and are slight smaller than actual size.

A **goose egg** is about three to four times the size of a large chicken egg.

Common snipe egg

Spotted flycatcher egg

Robin egg

The **snapping turtle egg** is more round than oval and is laid in a nest dug into the ground.

Emu eggs are large, dark emerald green, and weigh 1 to 2 pounds, equivalent to about eight to 12 chicken eggs.

The **ostrich egg** is the largest of eggs produced by any living land animal and can weigh more than 3 pounds. Dinosaur eggs were even larger.

The **hummingbird egg** is the smallest of bird eggs and weighs about 0.02 ounces.

Silk moth egg

Frog eggs have a jelly coating and are laid in water.

Sunfish egg

Human egg

An **alligator egg** is white, but it may be coated in bits of debris from the nest.

Herring gull egg

Chicken egg development

The **egg cell**, or **ovum**, is released into the **oviduct**.

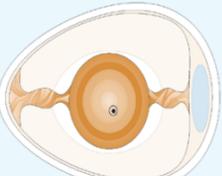
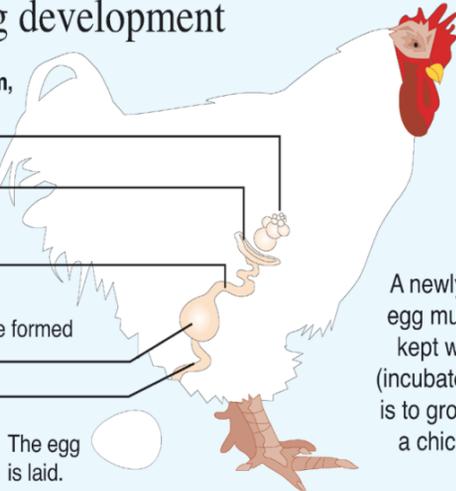
The egg is fertilized.

Layers of **albumen** (protein nutrients) form here.

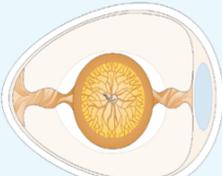
Shell membranes are formed in the gland area.

The **hard shell** forms, and colors develop on the shell.

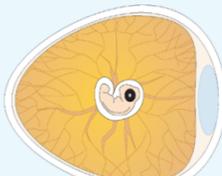
The egg is laid.



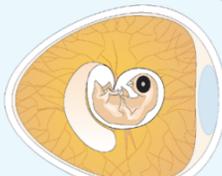
Day 1 The embryo begins to develop.



Day 3 Blood vessels begin to feed the yolk.



Day 7 Wings and legs begin to develop.



Day 12 Beak and waste sac form.

Day 21 The chick breaks out of the shell.



A newly laid egg must be kept warm (incubated) if it is to grow into a chicken.

SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://en.wikipedia.org>; <https://www.britannica.com>; <https://www.incredibleegg.org>; <https://www.livescience.com>; <https://funfactoo.com>; Michigan State University; Encyclopedia Americana, Grolier Inc.

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