



miniHatch Preparation Guide

Introduction

Thank you for choosing to be part of the miniHatch program! We are always excited when people want to be part of the hatching process. This document was developed to help you prepare for the arrival of your miniHatch equipment and outline some of the requirements of the incubator.

Part 1 - Equipment

What are you receiving?

- Brinsea Mini Advance Incubator
 - The incubator will be pre-set for all the hatching and incubating conditions. It is important these settings be left untouched.
- Power Supply
 - The incubator has a 6 foot power supply chord.
- A bottle of purified water
 - This water is to maintain humidity inside the machine. Drying is an effect of a heating element and the water compensates for this. The water is to go into one side of the trough in the base during incubation. The Monday before hatching, both troughs are to be filled.
- Hatching Eggs- 5 to 7, depending on availability and season
 - The eggs are marked to identify the parent stock of the babies for our breeding program.
- Quick Reference Guide
 - Outlines the process and activities the incubator requires and the responsibility of the class and teacher.
- Printed Educational Material
- Egg Candler- For viewing the inside of the egg.



Office Phone: (604)597-8299
Reservations & Assistance: reserve@minihatch.com
Website: www.minihatch.com

miniHatch is a trademark of C. Botkin Enterprises Ltd.

Part 2-Incubator Location

Please consider the following when choosing a place for the incubator:

- Avoid direct sunlight, or direct sources of heat. The incubator can handle heating, but cannot self-cool, so extreme heat can damage the developing embryos.
- Place on a sturdy table that will not tip over or rock when it gets bumped.
- Try and create a space of about 2 feet around the outside to prevent accidental slipping or pushing of the incubator. It will be very popular when the chicks start hatching!
- Place the table near an electrical plug. The chord with the machine is about 6 feet long.

Part 3- Delivery

A miniHatch representative has likely already contacted you to arrange an appointment date and time for delivery. We try to be as prompt as possible to all appointments, but sometimes issues can occur beyond our control. We will try to advise you of any major delay as soon as we can.

Our Hatching Expert will come with all your materials and is happy to speak to the students in groups up to 60 participants. We are happy to explain the incubation process with the students, including the biology of birds and their eggs, their purpose on our farm and their role on other farms, our farm and what we do, and any other questions that may arise. We will also outline the responsibility of the class and provide the rules around the incubator to the students (listed below). We always plan to spend around 20-30 minutes with the introduction and question time. We will then setup and start the incubator. Appointments on Monday and Tuesday will be asked to set their eggs on Wednesdays. To set eggs, lay them on their side in the slots on the tray, with the writing pointed out. For appointments on Wednesdays, we will set the eggs before we leave. We set eggs



Office Phone: (604)597-8299
Reservations & Assistance: reserve@minihatch.com
Website: www.minihatch.com

miniHatch is a trademark of C. Botkin Enterprises Ltd.

on Wednesdays so students (and teachers!) will be in or around the school when the eggs hatch.

Part 4-Incubation

There is relatively little to do during incubation. The only maintenance required is to put water into one side of the small troughs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. If there is a long weekend, just do it the day before and the day you return. The incubator is fine for up to 5 days without additional water in most circumstances. On day 1 on the display, fill the trough right up so you don't need to open the machine until the chicks are picked up. This should be the Monday before the chicks hatch. Also, on day 1, the machine will automatically quit turning the eggs for you. This prevents any possibility of the chicks toes being caught in the rotation. Also, feel free to candle the eggs every second day. If recording weight loss, you may do this at the same time.

Part 5- Hatching and Chicks

Please do not assist or handle the chicks, or open the incubator. The chicks are very fragile for the first few days of life and cooling periods and handling can severely damage them. The chicks are fine for up to 72 hours without food or water. They are still digesting their yolk. Immediately before hatching, the yolk absorbs into their stomachs, becoming an energy source for hatching and drying until they are mobile.

Conclusion

We hope you enjoy the hatching experience. Many people become annual customers of miniHatch because of its long-lasting memory for students, teachers and parents. Please contact us with any questions, comments or concerns. We are here to help you!



Appendix 1- Rules Around the Incubator For the Classroom

Do Not:

- **Open the incubator.** Only teachers can remove the top of the incubator.
- **Touch the eggs.** Only teachers can handle eggs. The eggs have been washed, but may still have harmful bacteria on them. Please wash your hands after handling the eggs.
- **Knock, bump or push the incubator.** Jostling or sudden movements can damage fragile developing embryos.
- **Unplug the incubator.** The machine will remember the settings, but irregular cooling can damage the embryos.

Do:

- **Take pictures of your eggs and babies!** The flash will not hurt them.
- **Candle regularly!** The growth happens quickly and it would be a shame to miss the important parts developing in there. The eggs will be fine to cool for a period not exceeding 15 minutes every couple days.
- **Monitor weight loss!** Properly developing eggs will lose 15% of their initial mass during the 21-day incubation period. This can be plotted and graphed.
- **Have students take turns carefully adding water to the machine.**

