

Chicken Egg Candling Chart

Candle on days 7, 14 and 18 of a 21-day hatch. The full guide, with pictures, is at flockmath.com/guide/candling-chicken-eggs-day-by-day/

WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON EACH CANDLING DAY

Day	Question it answers	A live egg looks like	Remove	Act on it by
Day 7	Which eggs are fertile and developing?	A small dark spot in the large end with fine blood vessels branching outward.	Clear eggs (infertile or died very early) and blood rings (a red circle or smear with no embryo: died in the first four days).	Removing clear eggs and blood rings
Day 14	Are they still alive?	Most of the egg is dark. The air cell is clearly bigger than on day 7. Watch for thirty seconds: a live embryo often shifts.	A loose dark mass with no vessels and no movement: it quit after day 7.	Removing eggs that have quit
Day 18	Is my humidity right?	The air cell takes up roughly a third of the egg.	Only eggs you are sure have failed. Then stop: days 19 to 21 are lockdown, with no turning, opening or candling.	Adjusting lockdown humidity, and next hatch's early humidity

DAY 18: THE HUMIDITY CHECK

The air cell is how you read moisture loss without a scale. The target is about 12% of the egg's starting weight lost by hatch. A too-small air cell is the more dangerous error: the chick needs that space to pip into.

What you see on day 18	What it means	What to change next time
Air cell about a third of the egg	On track	Nothing
Air cell noticeably small	Humidity too high days 1–18	Run drier early; verify with egg weights
Air cell unusually large, egg feels light	Humidity too low days 1–18	Add water earlier

How to candle

A bright LED torch in a dark room is all you need. Cup your hand around the blunt end and press the light against the shell. Be quick and gentle: every minute out is a minute of cooling, and jarred eggs can rupture delicate vessels. White eggs are far easier to read than brown; very dark shells can be close to impossible.

When in doubt, leave it in. Only pull eggs you are confident about: clear, or an obvious blood ring. About 80 to 90 percent of incubated eggs are fertile, so a clear egg or two in a dozen is normal.