

Egg anatomy

A STUDY IN GOODNESS.

SHELL

- nature's perfect package
- can be brown or white, depending on the breed of hen; nutritional value is the same
- the egg's first line of defence against the entry of bacteria
- approximately 10,000 tiny holes allow moisture and gases in and out
- odours can be absorbed through the shell; eggs should be stored in their carton in the main body of the refrigerator

SHELL MEMBRANES

- there are two membranes on the inside of the shell: outer and inner
- one membrane sticks to the shell and one surrounds the albumen
- the egg's second line of defence against bacteria

ALBUMEN

- also known as the egg white
- there are two layers: thick and thin albumen
- mostly made of water; also contains protein and some minerals
- represents 2/3 of the egg's weight
- when a fresh egg is broken, the thick albumen stands up firmly around the yolk



AIR CELL

- formed at the wide end of the egg as the egg cools after being laid
- the fresher the egg, the smaller the air cell

GERMINAL DISC

- appears as a slight depression on the surface of the yolk
 - the entry for the fertilization of the egg

YOLK MEMBRANE

- surrounds and holds the yolk
- the fresher the egg, the stronger the membrane

YOLK

- the egg's major source of vitamins and minerals; also contains protein, essential fatty acids and cholesterol
- colour ranges from light yellow to deep orange, depending on the hen's food; nutritional value is very similar
- when a fresh egg is broken, the yolk is round and well-centered
- represents 1/3 of the egg's weight

CHALAZA

- a pair of spiral bands that anchor the yolk in the centre of the thick albumen
- the fresher the egg, the more prominent the chalaza