

The Chick Chalet

Owners Manual



Avey Incubator, LLC.

PO Box 279

Hugo CO 80821

Tech Support: www.precisionincubators.com/support

Email: aveyincubator@gmail.com

Chick Chalet Owners Manual

I. Unpacking

A. Inspect for damage

1. Check for damage when unpacking for the first time.
2. Unwrap the door(s). Slide the hinge long pin on the door into the hole/slot in top of door frame until bottom (short) hinge pin clears frame and drops into hinge hole. Close door and lock/latch (lock serves as the latch too) Check for proper operation.

3. Fill water tray 2/3 full. (optional on Chick Chalet Lite) The water wicks up into the terry cloth washcloth hanging into the water tray. (Paper towels also work fine in place of the terry cloth towel) The water tray installs on the inside right hand side of the brooder. Slide the tab on the top of the water tray up into the gap between the side wall and the inside top panel. Then let the water tray slide down so the bottom tab is captured between the side wall and the inside bottom tray. By adjusting the height of the crossbar holding the washcloth you can achieve regulation of the humidity in the brooder.

B. The following items should be included

1. Chick Chalet
2. Air filter
3. Owner's Manual
4. Humidity water tray

C. Plug it in

1. The Chick Chalet plugs into 120VAC and draws about 130 watts . (185 watts for the large model)

III. Air Supply

A. The air supply completely changes about every 10 minutes, providing fresh air for the baby chicks. Air is recirculated, drawn up through the air filter, past the fan and heating elements, and humidity tray and then directed down the four corners of the Chick chalet.

B. Cleaning the air filter. (Optional on the Chick Chalet Lite) The Air filter must be clean for proper air circulation. The air filter is located in the center of the inside top. It covers the fan opening. The Air Filter is removed by unscrewing the 4 nuts and removing the filter cover. Rinse the filter material under the faucet and wring out to dry. Reinstall the filter and cover. Do not install a wet air filter - you can damage the temperature sensor. The temperature sensor is located between the air filter and the fan. Don't spray any liquid up into the fan opening. If you do, at some point you will cause the temperature sensor to fail.

C. The air filter must be clean to allow proper air flow and heating. A clogged air filter will cause erroneous temperature readouts.

D. Never place anything on top of the incubator. Heat must be allowed to radiate out off the top to provide proper heat regulation. Don't place bedding, newspaper, blankets or anything on the top.



IV. Adjusting the Chick Chalet

A. Selection knob

1. The selection knob has 2 operations. Push in (momentarily then let go) to start and push in to finish a selection and turn left or right to change the selection. (Push in and then release - some people try to hold the knob in and then turn the knob while it is held in - this won't work! Push in means push and release)

2. Passcode

- a) **Your passcode is 5 (default)**
- b) Push in the selection knob.
- c) When prompted dial in your passcode.
- d) Push in selection knob (and then let it out)
 - (i) If you wait too long the operation times out and the Chick Chalet resumes normal operation.
 - (ii) If you dial in the wrong passcode the Chick Chalet resumes normal operation
 - (iii) If you dial in the correct password the Chick Chalet moves to the temperature selection screen .

3. Temperature Selection

- A. Dial in the desired temperature.
- B. Push in the selection knob to set.
- C. **Always assess the baby when determining what is too hot or cold.** A baby that is too cold will huddle up against the side of the tub, a baby that is too hot will stretch out or even hang their head over the side when sleeping.

V. LCD (Liquid Crystal Display)

- A. Displays the temperature in both Celsius and Fahrenheit.
- B. Automatically uses the last settings even if the power has been off.

VI. Cleaning

A. Windex and a soft cloth will be all that is needed to keep your Chick Chalet clean. Spraying with Nolvosan or a 10% diluted bleach solution will disinfect the Chick Chalet.

B. The clear access door is made of a scratch resistant acrylic but for best performance should be wiped with a clean cotton washcloth (not a paper towel. Paper towels are more abrasive than cotton)

VII. High/Low Temperature Alarm

B. The high temperature alarm is pre-programmed for about 2 degrees higher than the setpoint temperature.

C. The over high temperature scenario includes:

1. Sun shining through a window onto the Chick Chalet
2. At lower operating temperatures i.e. 80°f the birds themselves may be big enough and old enough to generate their own heat to the point where they over-temp the Chick Chalet.
 - a) If the high temp Alarm sounds - push in the selection knob to silence it and open the Chick Chalet to vent some heat.

VIII. From Day 1

A. Definition: Day One Baby is a baby 1 day old or less.

Run the Chick Chalet at 98°f to start.

(With day one babies, I double check everything so place a thermometer near the baby to double check the temperature setting. Adjust the brooder temperature up or down to compensate.)

1. Place the baby in a butter tub or container of your choice.
2. Place the container inside a sandwich bag (or gallon ziploc type bag) along with a soaked paper towel. Keep the paper towel separated from the tub.
 - a) The idea is to add extra humidity to just the area in the ziploc. DON'T SEAL (ZIP) the ZIPLOC!! The bag acts as a shield so the air circulating in the Chick Chalet won't blow on and dry out the baby. Even though the humidity tray will add humidity to the Chick Chalet, I supplement that humidity for the first few days. After a week or so the baby does not need the zip loc bag.
 - b) Change the paper towel and bedding material in the

tub at every feeding. This warm moist environment will grow germs so extra vigilance is required here. (True with any brooder).

B. Reduce the operating temperature of the brooder on day 3 to about 97°f and look at the baby.

1. **Always assess the baby when determining what is too hot or cold.**

a) A baby that is too cold will huddle up against the side of the tub,

b) A baby that is too hot will stretch out or even hang their head over the side when sleeping.

2. Every day or two after that I reduce the temperature another degree. Assess the baby in the brooder. (Is the baby acting too cold or warm?) So by the time their real down feathers are coming in (2-3 weeks) the temperature is down in the mid 80's

a) When fully down feathered they can be at "room temperature". I'll leave them in the brooder (even turned off) and their own body heat will keep them comfortable.

C. At this point I also lessen the amount of dampness on the paper towel. Gradually over a period of 3-4 days allowing the baby to further dry out.

When placing older baby birds in the brooder deduct ½ degree per day of age up to 12 days old for an approximate starting temperature setting.

VIII. Humidity

a. Add humidity by adding water to the humidity tray.

After about 3 weeks or so your baby parrot may be big enough to generate enough additional moisture on their own and extra water isn't necessary anymore.

The adjustable humidity tray mounts up on the inside of the brooder. To install, slide up against inside wall and then down. To Adjust the humidity level, vary the height of the cross arm holding the wash cloth. By varying the height you also vary the surface area of wash cloth exposed to the air for evaporation. Therefore a measure of humidity control can be achieved.

This is the standard tray provided with the Chick Chalet . For best humidity control available, consider the available as an option, [digital humidity control](#) for use with Chick Chalet II's.

This is one of the most misunderstood features we offer. When we first designed the Chick Chalet series we had a drawer that slid in the top that would hold water. We quickly found that just a water tray did not provide enough surface area for evaporation and the as a result the tray performed poorly.

But wait... that's how the other brooders did it - how come ours performed so poorly? After further research we found out that the other brands of brooders didn't perform any better in adding moisture.

This is what started us on the path that ended up with our digital humidity control that works so well. But we also found that a water tray with a washcloth that dipped into the water - acting as a wick - would provide a huge amount of surface area to evaporate and achieved the goal of adding humidity (or water or moisture).

The next step was to make the bracket that holds the wash cloth adjustable so the amount of surface area could be varied. This achieved approximately a 15% swing in humidity from it's lowest setting to it's highest. Normally from 35% to 50% humidity in the brooder - but these numbers can vary based on temperature, ambient humidity and other factors.

This whole system was very effective and easy to use. The water tray is easily removed. It is dishwasher safe. The washcloth is easily replaced when it "gunks up" with mineral deposits. Which is nice - no special pad or humidity block to hunt down.

Some people have raised an objection to the water tray being accessible to the birds in the brooder. My opinion is that if the baby birds are that mobile they are too old to still be in the brooder - they should be in a starter cage by that time.

A water tray that is visible is more likely to be cleaned and sanitized. A drawer hidden in the top puts the water (and all the gunk standing water accumulates) out of sight and out of mind. Except the birds are breathing the air anyway.

X. Warranty

A. The Chick Chalet carries a one year parts and labor warranty. Shipping charges to and from our facility are the buyer's responsibility. To get support, fill out a support ticket at www.aveyinc.com/support.htm to get started.

X1. Return Policy.

A. Returns will be accepted for 15 days after shipping date on *unused equipment returned in the original packaging*. You must call for return authorization or shipment will be refused. Shipping charges and arrangements are your responsibility. A restocking charge of 20% will be assessed. Packages must be insured. You need to call and notify us on the day you ship your return, be prepared to supply your tracking number.

Digital Humidity Control

The ultrasonic humidifier replaces the humidity tray. The ultrasonic humidifier is placed as shown in this picture and the *cord is plugged into the outlet on the back of the brooder*.



Distilled water or filtered water (reverse osmosis) is necessary for extended trouble free operation. The white humidifier hose is pushed into the hole at the rear of the brooder. The hose end with the plastic disc goes in the humidifier.

After the incubator is warmed up to operating temperature, turn the switch on the humidifier to the lowest setting. When the incubator wants to add humidity the green light on the humidifier will also light up.

Setting the humidity level is just like setting the temperature. In fact it is the next menu screen after the “set temp” menu. The desired humidity range is between 40% – 50% relative humidity. Running at humidity levels in excess of 65% for an extended time will cause the electronics to fail prematurely. The first time you setup and turn on the incubator, first heat up the incubator to it's operating temperature, then turn on the humidifier and observe it as it builds humidity to the desired setpoint. Sometimes, when starting from cold, the incubator will say the humidity is 80% or more before you even have the humidifier turned on. This is when the actual humidity inside the incubator is less than 20%. The solution to this issue is to spritz some water on the back wall of the incubator to in effect “prime the pump”. Close the door and within a few seconds the humidity readout will drop to the mid twenties and then climb as the humidity builds up. On this first buildup the humidity may overshoot the setpoint, - so watch it peak and come back down and stabilize. Don't just turn it on and walk away.

Using the Digital Humidity Control requires a greater responsibility for the operator. There is a delicate balance between the size of the different components. And if you are incubating puppies or kittens and the total mass of your animals is measured in pounds rather than ounces, then even how often you change wet bedding for dry can affect performance. And working at the extreme limits can throw off that balance. You, as the operator, need to be able to recognize when the system is not working properly and how to react quickly to correct the problem.

One example is the incubator fills up with so much moisture that the window/door fogs up. This indicates an extreme humidity level. If this happens – immediately turn off the humidifier, open the door, and let the incubator dry out. The humidity readout most likely will say 70% or more

when this happens. Failure to act fast here will shorten the life of the electronics. Water and electronics do not get along – so again, we are balancing the moisture we need with the levels the electronics can tolerate.

The brooder will outlast the humidifier. Think of the humidifier as a replacement item that will need to be replaced every year or two. The water evaporating will leave mineral deposits behind – a white crusty film. This just a fact of life with any container holding water that is evaporating. When the humidifier is not being used – empty the base and turn the base on it's back side to allow any condensation to drain out.