Ovulation. At maturity the ova are released from the ovary to enter the oviduct by a process known as ovulation. Most of the ovulations occur during the morning hours, as it is not natural for ovulations to occur in the mid to late afternoon.

Double ovulation. Normally, only one yolk is ovulated per day, but occasionally two may be released and on rear occasions there may be three. If two are ovulated at the same time normally only one enters the oviduct, but if both are picked up simultaneously by the oviduct, a double yolk egg will result. About two-thirds of the double-yolk eggs are the result of ovulations within 3 hours of each other. If there is a great difference in ovulation time, two eggs may be produced on the same day, but usually the second is soft-shelled.

Double-yolk eggs are more common during the first part of the egg production period because of an overactive ovary, and are more often associated with meat-type strains than with egg-type ones. The incidence is an inherited trait since some birds produce higher percentages of double-yolk eggs that others. Spring and summer-housed pullets also produce a greater number of double-yolk eggs that fall- and winter-housed pullets.

Yolk size affects egg size. The size of the completed egg is more closely associated with yolk size than with any other factor, although variations in albumen secretions in the oviduct have some influence. The yolk-albumen relationship changes throughout the laying cycle. Eggs produced at the beginning of the laying period have yolks that comprise about 25% of the total weight of the egg, while yolks make up about 30% of egg weight when hens are near the end of their laying period. In other words, as egg size increases, yolk weight increases more rapidly than the weight of albumen. In younger flocks when egg size is small, increasing the level of protein in the diet may increase the total weight up to 1.5 doz (3.5 g/ea).

Internal layers. Sometimes the infundibulum loses its ability to pick up a high proportion of the yolks, and they accumulate in the body cavity faster than they can be reabsorbed. Such hens are known as **'internal layer'**, although the term does not define the condition well. The abdomen in such layers becomes distended, and the hen stands in an upright position.