

The Dinosaur Eggs

History and provenance

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The egg-drop problem

Michael Boardman's *The Egg-Drop Numbers* appeared in *Mathematics Magazine* in December 2004 [1]. It begins with a two-egg, 36-story version from *Which Way Did the Bicycle Go?* and develops generalizations using recurrence relations and counting methods.

What varies across tellings

The number of floors, eggs, and permitted drops varies widely. Replacing ordinary eggs with “dinosaur eggs” simply makes the idealization of unusually durable eggs part of the story.

The mathematical assumptions are crucial: eggs share one threshold; safe drops do not weaken them; and higher floors do not become safe again. The page now states these explicitly and allows the outcome that every available floor is safe.

Boardman's article is a documented research treatment and points to an earlier published puzzle. It does not establish that Boardman invented the egg-drop question, and this note does not claim to identify its earliest origin.

Sources

- [1] Michael Boardman, The Egg-Drop Numbers, *Mathematics Magazine* 77(5) (December 2004), 368–372.
<https://users.math.msu.edu/users/magyarp/math481/Egg-Drop-Recurrence.pdf>

Sources checked September 7, 2026. A documented appearance is not necessarily the earliest appearance.