



Pupation

When caterpillars are ready to pupate, they will attach themselves to the top of their enclosure, firmly planting their very back feet to the surface. They will stay that way for a day or so before letting go of the surface with their other feet to hang in a "J" shape. It's important not to touch them during this time. They will eventually molt again, revealing their pupal form, and then they'll condense themselves down into the usual pupal form.

Caterpillar Development

- Caterpillars will eat and grow through 5 instars before they reach roughly 1 inch in length and pupate.
- Between each instar, they will stop eating, attach themselves to a surface, go still, and molt. Typically, they eat their shed skin but leave their old head capsule.
- You can tell if a caterpillar is about to molt by gently tapping their little back end. If they refuse to pick up those back feet, let them be!
- You can transfer caterpillars to a mesh pop-up cage around the third instar stage (about half an inch long).
- You'll need to empty frass from their container and use a clean paper towel to wipe away any residue. Do not use any cleaners or disinfecting wipes! These could kill the caterpillar.

The pupal stage lasts for 10-14 days



Nearing Eclosure

The pupa will become translucent, revealing the adult butterfly inside when it's close to eclosing (emerging from the chrysalis).



If you see the white dots on the butterfly's body and the orange wings clearly, check back often so you can witness the butterfly eclose.

If the pupa is fully darkened without showing the orange of the wings for a few days, the pupa is likely dead.