

FOREST FLOOR MUSHROOMS

"GROW YOUR OWN" OYSTER MUSHROOM KIT



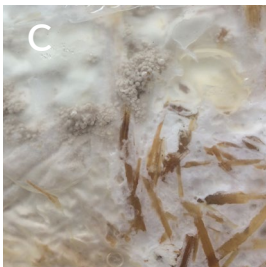
About Your Mushroom Kit

Your Oyster Mushroom Kit is made up of two basic components, organic rye grain spawn and pasteurized wheat straw. The fungus has been introduced to the straw via the grain spawn and has been slowly colonizing the straw over the past couple of weeks. The fluffy white stuff is called mycelium and it acts as a network, allowing moisture and nutrients to flow freely through the organism. The kits are sold ready to fruit and should produce oyster mushrooms in as little as 10 days from purchase.



Preparing Your Kit for Fruiting

1. Begin by cutting a couple of small drainage slits in the bottom of the bag to allow any extra liquid which builds up at the bottom to drain out (Roughly 1 cm in length).
2. Next, squeeze the air out of the top of the bag and twist the excess plastic into a tight ball. Secure it with an elastic band, clothespin or provided plastic clip. You want to make sure that there isn't much trapped air in the top of the bag. (Image A).
3. In order to fruit, the kit requires fresh air. Your next step is to cut slits, roughly one inch in length in the side of the bag. 2-3 equally spaced cuts should be enough to start off with. When the cut areas are exposed to fresh air, mushrooms will begin to form. (Image B).
4. Don't be surprised if you see small mushrooms form in other spots in the bag. You can leave them be or cut a small hole for them to grow through. As the mushrooms form they will grow out of the slits, towards the fresh air on the outside. (Image C).



Choosing a Spot for Your Kit

Almost anywhere in the house can be a successful location for your kit but there are three main factors to keep in mind. Light, humidity, and temperature. Contrary to popular belief, mushrooms do require light in order to grow properly, however, you should avoid direct sunlight. Ambient light from a nearby window is really all they require. Mushrooms are traditionally grown at very high humidity, upwards of 90% in most commercial operations, however, they can also be successfully cultivated in the home at much lower levels. Anywhere around 50% is all the kits really require, and this is easily achievable in our usually muggy Ontario summers. The kitchen counter is my usual suggestion for first timers. The bathroom is another location in the house which may have slightly higher humidity, and will also yield good results. A sure fire way to achieve high humidity, and in turn better yields from your kit, is to build a simple perlite terrarium. For about \$20 you can build a very low-tech terrarium which will easily maintain 80%+ humidity. See "Perlite terrarium instructions" link. Room temperature is ideal for fruiting your oyster mushroom kit.

Perlite terrarium instructions: <http://freshcapmushrooms.com/learn/how-to-build-a-sgfc/>

Harvesting

After about 5-7 days from pin formation your mushrooms should be ready to harvest. A good sign they are ready to pick is when top caps have fully unfurled, the gills are visible and the margin of the caps begin to dry. Using a sharp knife, cut the cluster as close to the bag as possible. Don't worry if you cut a bit of the plastic off with it. Once you have removed the first flush of mushrooms, inspect the bag once again and make some additional cuts in the plastic. The kit should fruit again within two weeks of the first harvest. It is important to harvest your oyster mushrooms at the right time. If they are left too long the mushrooms will drop their spores, both making a mess and negatively impacting the air quality of your house. Oyster mushrooms release a very large sporeload compared to other mushrooms so its important not to forget about your kit come harvest time. If your not sure, air on the side of caution and harvest them early.

Additional Notes

Contamination is always a concern with mushroom cultivation. All my kits are guaranteed contamination free. If any competing bacteria appear on your kit before your first flush of mushrooms, feel free to contact me and I will be happy to replace it with a new one. Common contaminations are green, black, or blue mold. Basically anything that isn't white, fluffy looking mycelium.

Later on in the life of your kit you may also encounter contamination. This is not uncommon and can be spot treated with a hydrogen peroxide solution, sprayed on the contaminated area. If you have already had 2 healthy flushes, it might be close to the end of the kits life anyway.

After your kit has produced 2+ flushes of mushrooms, it will be depleted in both moisture and nutrients. At this point the contents of the bag can be removed and composted. However, if placed outside, it is very likely it will continue to fruit. Find a shady place in the garden and simply let it do its thing. Alternatively, the block could be buried in a bed of fresh wood chips. The fungus will continue to expand, colonizing the newly introduced media, and could potentially fruit for months to come.

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me at brodie@forestfloormushrooms.com or leave me a message on the [Forest Floor Mushrooms facebook page](#).

