

DOUBLE BLIND

The Beginner's Mushroom Growing Guide

What You Need to
Know to Get Started

Mushrooms are miniature pharmaceutical factories, and of the thousands of mushroom species in nature, our ancestors and modern scientists have identified several dozen that have a unique combination of talents that improve our health.

– Paul Stamets



Dear Fungi Friends,

We're so grateful to have you as a part of DoubleBlind's community. DoubleBlind is a true labor of love which we started because we believe plant medicines have profound potential to heal ourselves, others, and, ultimately, the planet. The movement to grow your own food and medicine—whether it's herbs or mushrooms—is not just empowering, but it's a political statement. It's about taking your health and wellness into your own hands—and we're here to help you do that.

We hope this guide gets you excited about the process, and helps you avoid some rookie mistakes! Please do let us know if there's anything we can do to support you. We're always available on our Instagram or at hello@doubleblindmag.com.

Sincerely,
Shelby and Madison
DoubleBlind Co-Founders



About DoubleBlind

DoubleBlind has enrolled more than 4000 students in its courses, taught by the world's leading psychedelic experts. DoubleBlind's co-founders Shelby Hartman and Madison Margolin are journalists by trade and have reported extensively on psychedelics for Rolling Stone, VICE, LA Weekly, Playboy, and others. DoubleBlind has a joint monthly column on Rolling Stone. In 2020, Forbes named them among eight female leaders in the cannabis and plant medicine space. All of the proceeds from our courses goes directly back to funding our journalism to destigmatize psychedelics and help people like you heal, something we're deeply passionate about.

At DoubleBlind, we give the full picture, including information on potential risks. All of our articles and webinars feature leading, qualified experts such as Dr. Rick Strassman, associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine; microdosing pioneer Dr. James Fadiman; mycologist Paul Stamets; and Rick Doblin, founder of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies.

But enough about us!

If you're reading this, you're most likely:

- Curious about how to get started growing your own shrooms
- Wondering how you can avoid common rookie mistakes
- Seeking trusted information on the benefits of medicinal mushrooms

The good news is—we'll cover all of that here!

Getting Started: What You Need To Know

Cost

\$150-200 for a basic set-up. There's no limit on how much you can spend as you get into growing and want to upgrade to be more sophisticated. The good news is: once you have the set-up, you'll have it forever, and at \$200, you will make your money back prettyyyy fast. You'll get about 30 to 60 dried grams of mushrooms from a spore syringe, which costs about \$10.

Time

Six to twelve weeks. Most of that time you're waiting for your shroomies to grow. The time-commitment is only about a couple full days for inoculation, transferring the spores to the substrate, and then checking in on them during colonization to mist and fan.

Access

Psilocybin spores are legal and can be ordered in all U.S. states except California, Idaho, and Georgia. They can also be ordered in many parts of Canada. Online vendors will only sell for research and microscopy purposes. Note: as soon as you start growing them you are breaking federal law.

Supplies

Spores can be purchased easily online in the U.S. and Canada. We like [Mushroom Prints](#), because they have a customer service line and tracking. If they're out of what you're looking for or you just want a better deal, you can also find reviews for online vendors [here](#). All the other supplies can be purchased easily online or in the garden section of a store like Home Depot or Walmart.

Space

Mushrooms can be grown in your house or apartment in a plastic storage bin. For the inoculation phase, you'll need a small space that's dark, clean and doesn't get too much airflow. A clean shelf, the top of your refrigerator, or a closet will work. For the colonization phase, you'll just need a place—like the corner of your bedroom—that's big enough for one medium to large storage bin. The bin will need indirect sunlight. You'll also want to make sure you can regulate the temperature where your mushies are growing. A space around 75 to 82 degrees Fahrenheit is ideal. In the winter, you can bring the temperature up with a space heater or by placing your bin on a heating pad. In the summer, you can bring the temperature down by looking for a place that's naturally cooler in your home or with an air conditioner.

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Benefits of Medicinal Mushrooms

Medicinal mushrooms have shown promise for a variety of conditions, from cancer to inflammation and depression.

Depression

After tens of millions of dollars in research, psilocybin—the psychoactive component in psilocybin mushrooms—is now in the final phase of research before FDA approval. Psilocybin has been fast-tracked by the FDA for treatment resistant depression and major depression disorder because it's shown promise for treating folks who have failed to find relief from any treatments currently on the market.

Anxiety

Psilocybin has also shown extensive promise in research at Johns Hopkins, New York University and other prominent institutions for alleviating anxiety—or what's called “end-of-life distress”—in patients who are terminally ill.

Addiction

The research is not as definitive here, but there have been a couple of smaller trials showing psilocybin is effective for both alcoholism and nicotine dependency.

Immune Support

From reishi to shiitake and chaga, mushrooms have been used for millennia for immune support. Note: the process for growing wood-loving species like reishi and shiitake is slightly different than the process for growing mushrooms such as oysters and psilocybes.

Our full guide on using medicinal mushrooms is [here](#).

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Avoid the 5 Most Common Mistakes

1.

Contamination

Contamination is the number one reason that people fail at growing mushrooms. The two times when shrooms are most at risk of contamination are during the inoculation process and when you're transferring the mycelium cakes to the bulk substrate. Our number one tip here is to be more careful than you think you need to be—take every precaution you can think of: wipe down every surface and the floors nearby with 70% rubbing alcohol or a solution that's one part bleach/ 10 parts water; spray the air with Lysol disinfectant spray; wear gloves and a mask (there's a risk of contamination from your breath); tie your hair back; sterilize the spore syringe by wiping it with alcohol, running it through a flame, and wiping it again; and sterilize the jars or bags you're using for your substrate during the inoculation phase. Some people even shower and put on clean clothes before they work with their mushies. Growing mushrooms isn't that hard or expensive, especially once you get the hang of it, but it's a big bummer to go through the whole process only to find out your bags are contaminated. Also, don't try to hold onto bags or jars that are showing signs of contamination if you have other bags or jars nearby. Just toss 'em ASAP!

2.

Confusion

Mushroom-growing fanatics are notorious for having different opinions on the best way to grow mushrooms! It's kind of like how everyone thinks their grandma's meatballs are the best, right? The most important thing to know is that there isn't one "right" way to grow mushrooms, BUT you can't always mix and match techniques. So, for example, there's a lot of different mediums that mushrooms can grow in. You can grow mushrooms using only perlite (your mycelium cakes will sit on top of the perlite) or you can grow mushrooms in a substrate that includes a mix of ingredients like perlite, coir, vermiculite, and gypsum. Think of the substrate as like the soil for your mushies! If you do only perlite, you'll have to drill holes in a plastic bin creating something called a shotgun fruiting chamber (we don't recommend this for first-time growers as it can be a pain!). If you do a combination of ingredients like perlite, coir, vermiculite and gypsum, you will not want to grow your mushies in a shotgun fruiting chamber, but, rather, a tub with just two holes that are covered with micropore tape. This is why it's best to have support during your mushroom growing process from folks like the mycologists on the DoubleBlind team, if possible. YouTube, Reddit and other message boards have lots of amazing free information, but it can get pretty confusing, pretty fast, if you start looking for answers online. Just know that if you decide to give this a try on your own, lots of folks online will give you different advice about what they think is best.

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3.

Impatience

The first step in the mushroom growing process, called inoculation, is really simple and takes less than an hour. But after that, you've gotta wait two to six weeks before you'll be ready for the next step. Ever heard the phrase, "a watched pot never boils?" First-time growers will often get so excited about growing mushies that they'll check up on their grow every day and get frustrated when they don't see anything happening immediately. They'll wonder if they did something wrong and sometimes they'll move onto the next phase of the process before it's time to do so. It can take weeks before you see any action at all after inoculating the substrate. And once you do, you have to wait til the substrate is fully colonized before moving onto the next step if you want the greatest chances of success. Our advice? Inoculate, shake after two days, and then forget about your mushies for at least a week!

4.

Misdiagnosing the Problem

Sometimes, if you don't have experience, it can be hard to tell what the heck is going on with your grow! The biggest thing is figuring out whether your grow is contaminated and, if it is, deciding what to do about it. For example, bruising—when psilocybin mycelium turn a bluish color—is totally normal. But bruising can often be confused with contamination. If any of your mycelium are contaminated, you'll want to throw those out immediately so they don't contaminate anything else growing nearby. But sometimes people think contamination is bruising and throw out perfectly good mycelium (such a bummer after all that love has been put into the process!). There are tests you can do like rubbing a q-tip on the blue part to see if it comes off (it shouldn't if it's bruising) or give it a whiff (contamination reeks!), but this is also why it's helpful to have one-on-one support from a mushroom hobbyist during the grow process to help you identify potential problems and solve them.

5.

Giving Up

Mushroom growing is an art and a science and, like all things from cooking to gardening, it takes practice. You can succeed your first time if you do everything properly, but you might not. Was the first egg you fried perfect? This is why it's helpful to have support from experts. Either way, stick with it, because once you do get good at it (and you will!), it can be incredibly empowering, fun and rewarding to be able to grow your own food and medicine. A lot of people find that once they're turned on to mushroom growing, they never go back!

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Ready to take control of what you put in your body and grow your own shrooms?

Want to be supported along the way by a team of expert mycologists?

The good news? At DoubleBlind, we've paired the world's leading psychedelic experts with more than 4000 students to make sure they get the results they're looking for.

Why?

Because we know how tiring it can be to search through Youtube, online forums and random articles for guidance. And we want to make sure that you can take your health and wellness into your own hands.

That's why we built a powerful, easy-to-follow course (community of other growers included) to give you all the tools you need to successfully set up your own DIY cultivation site and grow your own shrooms right at home.

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Inside of this course you get:

- » **Live access to mycologists** (*Value: \$1500*)
The grow process can be confusing. We spend hours with you, holding your hand every step of the way.
- » **Access to a beautiful, supportive community** (*Value: \$200*)
More than 1000 mushroom growers from around the world, supporting each other and bonding.
- » **Lifetime access to step-by-step videos and guides** (*Value: \$400*)
Seven videos, written companions, a psilocybin legality guide, and frequently asked questions to help you avoid rookie mistakes
- » **Where to buy spores and other supplies** (*Value: \$50*)
Trustworthy sites to buy everything you need to grow for less than \$200
- » **Limited Time Bonuses!** (*Value: \$150*)
Webinars on Trip Sitting Webinar with Sara Gael, How to Become a Psychedelic Therapist with Ingmar Gorman, and Psychedelics in the Brain with Robin Carhart-Harris

That's a value of \$2300...for only \$149.99

Because we believe that growing shrooms shouldn't be hard or expensive. And we know that once you're hooked, you'll never have to rely on anyone else to access your medicine again.

Ready to join the movement and grow your own shrooms?

[Click here to find out more!](#)

Over 4000 students have taken our courses. Here's what they're saying:

Megan D.



4/10/2021 – Verified Purchase

I'm so glad that I purchased this course. The additional videos really helped me in understanding how to cultivate mushrooms. I love that you're able to go back to any step along the way to review it. FAQs are on point as well!

Andre N.



4/5/2021 – Verified Purchase

Great videos, great references, wonderful QnA and supporting documents; can not say enough good things about this course! Enough to get started but not so much as to overwhelm, but also all the guidance to take you as far as you'd like to go...I'm starting agar work!!! Who knew?!?

Louise G.



3/17/2021 – Verified Purchase

I was nervous and overwhelmed with all of the info on how to grow on the internet. When I found DB, I was so relieved! I loved how easy it was so follow along and the info was easy to understand for a first timer. I'm also obsessed with the aesthetics of DB and Brooke is adorable as can be.

Travis B.



2/28/2021 – Verified Purchase

A step by step guide in order to grow mushrooms that is easy to follow and understand! Nailed it DB and thank you thank you thank you!

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Frequently Asked Questions

I've tried growing mushrooms before and failed. Should I try again?

Absolutely! Growing mushrooms is like gardening or cooking, you'll change your process slightly every time and only get better at it as you play around and learn more.

I've been doing some research on the internet and I'm getting a lot of mixed messages about how to grow mushrooms. I'm confused! What do I do?

Mushroom-growing fanatics are notorious for having different opinions on the best way to grow mushrooms! It's kind of like how everyone thinks their grandma's meatballs are the best, right? Take the variety of opinions with a grain of salt. You will figure out what works best for you as you continue to play around and refine your process.

What tek/ method is best for first-time growers?

In our course, we teach what's called Spiderman tek (or the Uncle Ben's method). We think this is best for first-time growers. A lot of first-time growers also do what's called the PF tek.

What mushrooms are best for first-time growers?

Oyster and Psilocybe cubensis mushrooms are good for first-timers. The Phoenix oyster (*Pleurotus pulmonarius*) is a good one to start with if your house is around 75 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Not all psychedelic mushrooms are Psilocybe cubensis. There are a variety of Psilocybe cubensis strains, however, that are easy to grow, including B+, Penis Envy, and Golden Teacher. Oysters are good because they are more contamination resistant than Psilocybe cubensis.

What are the most important tips for success?

Patience during the inoculation phase (it could take up to six weeks and sometimes longer for your substrate to colonize) and making sure you're extra careful about keeping everything sterile. Contamination is the greatest risk of failure.

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Ready to grow shrooms?

Join our community and learn how:

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At DoubleBlind, we're very very passionate about the movement to grow your own and want to do everything we can to support people on this journey. Many people do successfully grow mushrooms on their own—and there are free resources available online for you to do that.

If you'd like to grow mushrooms with us, we currently have a community of more than 2000 mushroom growers from around the world growing together. In addition to access to this invite-only community, our course comes with video episodes and PDFs to walk you through every stage of the grow process. It also includes weekly access to DoubleBlind's expert mycologists Dr. K Mandrake, Virginia Haze, and Caine Barlow, to hold your hand through the process as you encounter challenges.

Either way, we're so happy to have you as a part of our community and encourage you to reach out anytime if we can help! We're always here for you: hello@doubleblindmag.com

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