

# OYSTER Mushroom Kit [www.growmushroomscanada.ca](http://www.growmushroomscanada.ca)

Your kit contains the white mycelium of an oyster mushroom (*either yellow, elm, pearl, blue or pink*) growing in a bag of pure hardwood sawdust and organic wheat bran. With a little care it will produce two to three flushes of delicious mushrooms.

## Select a Location and Prepare the Kit:

Choose an area in your house where you will pass by daily to monitor your kit's progress. Blue and pearl oysters prefer temperatures ranging from ~10C-21C, while yellow, pink and elm oysters prefer ~21C-29C.

**Avoid direct sunlight** but indirect light is necessary for mushrooms to form (enough light to read by).

Place the kit on a plate or cookie tray to catch any dripping water. With a sharp knife or scissors cut an X on one side of the bag about 10 cm (4 inches) long. This will create 4 triangular flaps from under which mushrooms will soon grow.

## Keep it Humid:

Mushrooms need very high humidity to form. To increase humidity, roll up the bottom of the humidity tent and place over the kit. (See our website for a [demonstration](#) of preparing humidity tent for use.) If you did not purchase a tent, you can use a clear plastic bag with a dozen dime-size holes. Make sure to arrange the tent to allow space for mushrooms to form at the X.

Mist 2-4 times daily with \*non-chlorinated water, or more often if needed, to maintain condensation on the inside of the humidity tent. If you don't have a spray bottle, place a container of water inside the tent. *\*Note: Chlorine can be removed from tap water by letting it sit in an open pot for 24 hours or boiling 10 minutes and letting cool.*

Typically within two weeks a cluster of oyster mushrooms will emerge from the cut X. As the mushrooms grow, air exchange becomes increasingly important. Not enough fresh air results in long stems and small mushroom caps, while too much air exchange can cause them to dry out and abort because it's harder to keep the humidity high.

Oysters in particular like a lot of fresh air, so some people find it helpful to prop up the bottom of the tent or completely remove it once the cluster is well formed (about the size of a golf ball, with caps starting to expand). To compensate for the loss of humidity, mist mushrooms directly and/or place a wet tea towel or water dish underneath.

***Pro tip:*** *If it's a wet rainy week, your oyster kit will be happy to fruit outdoors by the forces of nature – no tent, nor misting required!*

## When to Harvest:

You will be enjoying your mushrooms within a week of seeing them begin to grow. Oyster mushrooms are at their prime for eating when the cap has expanded but the outer edges are still slightly turned under. If you let

them over-mature, you will notice a dusting of white spores (mushroom “seeds”) on your table. The small amount of spores from a few grow kits is no concern, and the mushrooms are still great to eat.

**Note:** *If you are growing large amounts of mushrooms indoors, be sure to vent your fruiting chamber outdoors because high spore loads can cause health problems over time.*

Harvest by twisting off the entire cluster, or cutting with a knife at the base. Cook them up fresh, or store in a paper bag in the refrigerator and eat within a week. Always cook your mushrooms before eating. The stems are more chewy than the caps, so you may want to cook them a little longer. For long term storage dehydrate and store in an airtight container. You can also blanch or sauté and freeze them for later use.

### **The Second Flush:**

After your first harvest, replace the humidity tent and continue to mist a few times daily. A second flush of mushrooms will soon grow from the original hole. (Alternatively, you can cut a new hole in the opposite side of the bag, and tape the original hole closed.)

If no new mushrooms emerge within weeks, or you notice your kit has gotten very light, then it probably needs to be rehydrated. Submerge the kit (bag and all) in cold non-chlorinated water for a few hours. (Weigh it down with a heavy plate). Drain off **all** the water. If necessary, poke holes in the bottom to drain any excess, as water left to pool inside the bag may cause bacteria to grow.

Place kit back under humidity tent and begin misting a few times daily until new mushrooms grow.

It may be possible to get a third flush, sometimes even a fourth flush, before the mycelium has consumed up all of the food resources available in the kit.

Once no more mushrooms appear, it’s time to remove from bag and compost the kit. The mushroom block is a super soil amendment in your garden!

### **Why Stop Here?!**

Oyster mushrooms are a great starting place, but once you have a taste for growing mushrooms, you might want to try other gourmet varieties as well, like [Lion’s Mane](#) or [Shiitake](#).

### **Questions?**

**Your success** is our success and we are happy to help!

Our website has many resources to help you grow mushrooms. Visit our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for answers to common questions, and our [Learn to Grow](#) library for videos and mushroom growing resources.

For keen mushroom growing enthusiasts, we highly recommend Paul Stamets' book [Mycelium Running](#), and [Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms](#) is a “must have” for market gardeners and commercial growers

If you have questions, please email us at [info@growmushroomscanada.ca](mailto:info@growmushroomscanada.ca)

We **love** to see pictures of your mushroom growing adventures too!