



OYSTER MUSHROOM DIY GUIDE

Tools: Razor Blade, spray bottle. Plate or waterproof mat

Getting Started

- *Location.* Find a nice spot with plenty of indirect sunlight or if you're windowless use a "natural light" bulb. A little direct sunlight, especially in the winter, is ok. The best place for mushrooms is in a bathroom with a shower, near a window. Do not put your kit on a surface that could get damaged by standing water.
- *Optional*
 - 1 humidity bag (a translucent and semi-rigid bag that can rest over the growing mushrooms-2 gallon is great)
 - towel.:

Watching for Growth

Once you have your kit in hand, you may or may not see little light patches with tiny bumps around your kit.

Cutting the bag: Once you see these patches, it is time to free the baby mushroom clusters! With your razor, cut a square around the patch and remove the square of plastic. You now have a "mushroom window." Now, fold the top of the bag over the opposite side as the cut and lay the kit down so that the folded section is tucked under. At this point your baby oysters are free to grow, but they need mist and humidity.

Misting/humidification: With a water spray bottle, mist the mushroom window a few times (depending on the strength of the sprayer). You should see droplets less than a mm in diameter on the mushroom clusters rather than puddles. Spray on the kit outside the mushroom window to boost local humidity. These droplets can be big. Or you could opt instead for a damp towel on the kit (free from the mushroom window, and refreshed before it mildews). Ideally, you would re-mist within a few hours of the droplets evaporating. But misting 2 times a day should be sufficient as long as your humidity is within range. Continue misting until the day of harvest.

If you're using a humidity bag, place your humidity bag upside down over the kit with as much clearance away from the sides of the kit as possible. Lifting up the bottom of the humidity bag, mist the inside of the humidity bag thoroughly. Adding two holes on opposite SIDES of the bag will provide sufficient air flow. Simply lifting or fanning the humidity bag during the day will help provide more fresh air. Mist and fan at least once a day when using a bag. .Continue misting until the day of harvest.

Harvesting:

- *Timing.* The ideal time to pick oyster mushrooms is right before they start dropping spores in earnest- when the color goes from a deeper blue to a lighter blue-gray and the edges of the cap are still incurved but the tops are flattening out. Studying images of harvested oyster mushrooms will help in timing harvests properly.
- *Plucking.* When it's time to harvest, pull the mushroom off, twisting slightly and removing all mushroom tissue.

Troubleshooting:

- *No mushrooms.* If baby mushrooms aren't growing, this is most likely due to dryness. If mycelium dries out it will not produce mushrooms. Pluck or dried or yellowed surfaces with a fork (creating a divot) and keep the newly exposed surface misted just as you would baby mushrooms.
- *Mutants.* If your kit produces mushrooms that have long stems and small caps, increase ventilation by removing the humidity bag, adding bigger holes to the humidity bag, or indirectly fanning the kit).
- *Bad Smell.* Mushrooms have their funk, but it's a fresh funk. If anything smells "bad" you may not be allowing enough

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evaporation to occur from your mushrooms and should increase airflow via humidity bag holes or increased fanning frequency.

Cooking: Saute, tempura, stew, soup... oyster mushrooms are very versatile. Try browning them in a pan with butter and salt until caramelized, then throw in some garlic before plate-ing for a simple treat.

Disposal: Everything but the plastic bags are compostable. Keep an eye on your compost as mushrooms may continue to grow!