



Black Poplar

Kit Instructions



Growing mushrooms is fun, easy, and a delicious source of healthy nutrients! Black poplar are flavorful, nutritious edible mushrooms that are rich in protein and fiber. They also contain naturally occurring antioxidant compounds. Directions for growing, harvesting, cooking and preserving are below. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us. *All ingredients are natural and organic. The kit contains following ingredients: hardwood sawdust, nitrogen supplement, grain spawn and mushroom mycelium. The mushrooms are 100% gluten-free.*

Grow them...

- It is important to not open the bag. Within a few days of receiving the kit, cut 1 slit in the bag, about 4" long. See red line in photo for proper placement of the slit. Use a clean knife to cut the slit. It is okay to cut into the substrate in the bag. The black poplar mushrooms will grow out of this slit.
- Keep the excess plastic bag tucked under the kit just like in the photo. You do not want to have any air space inside the bag.
- Place the mushroom kit indoors and out of the direct path of a heat source so the kit does not dry out. A corner in your kitchen, living room, bathroom, laundry room... usually works well.



Four environmental factors your mushroom kit will need maintained to thrive are humidity, light, temperature, oxygen.

Humidity

The ideal humidity range to grow mushrooms is 75% - 95%. An easy way to keep the kit in its ideal humidity range is to fill the bottom of a plastic tote with a few inches of perlite and add water $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the perlite. *Perlite is a natural volcanic mineral that will retain water which will slowly evaporate over time, creating humidity.* Place the kit on top of the perlite. A lid can be placed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way on the tote, but not more than that or the kit will not receive enough oxygen. Mist the kit and the inside of the tote 2 times a day. Also make sure to add water to the perlite as needed to keep it moist.

*A hygrometer can be used to measure humidity. Hygrometers used in humidors can accurately measure high humidity levels.

*A humidifier or fogger can also be used but you must make sure to monitor the amount of humidity closely because too much moisture can cause bacterial infections and mushroom rot.



Mushroom kit on top of perlite inside a tote



2 types of spray bottles, both work great!

Light

Black poplar needs at least 8 hours of light daily, either artificial or natural light. This can usually be accomplished by having the kit anywhere in your home where it is not in total darkness. There is no need to set up special lighting for your kit. *Some fungi contain photoreceptors that are primarily active during the fruiting body stage.*

Temperature

Black poplar prefers temperatures between 60°F and 75°F.

Oxygen

Black poplar mushrooms also need oxygen; they absorb oxygen and emit CO₂. Make sure the kit is not placed in an area with limited oxygen or sealed in a tote or it will not be able to grow.



Small indoor greenhouse being used as a fruiting chamber instead of a tote

Harvest them...

- The time it takes for the mushrooms to start growing and the time it takes between crops depends on the growing conditions – mainly temperature. You will have 3 crops of mushrooms generally 7–28 days apart. The first crop should start growing within 2 weeks.
- The mushrooms are ready to harvest when their edges start to flatten out. Harvest by pulling out the whole cluster. Do not cut the mushrooms or leave a stem butt behind. Continue keeping the humidity, light, temperature and oxygen regulated between crops.
- Store fresh mushrooms in a paper bag in your refrigerator. Fresh black poplar mushrooms will usually keep up to 5 days in the refrigerator.



Not ready to harvest, the edges are still curled under



Ready to harvest, edges have flattened out

...And then keep on using the kit

When your kit is finished producing indoors, give it a second life in your garden! Remove the plastic bag, break up the spent mushroom block, and mix it into your garden soil or compost, use it as mulch around fruit trees and other plants, or add a thin layer to potted plants. The spent substrate adds organic matter, helps improve soil structure, and can help retain moisture.

And you may get a bonus! Keep the area moist and your mushrooms may even fruit again outdoors when conditions are right.



Enjoy them...

Black poplar mushrooms have a rich mushroom flavor and crisp texture. They can be diced, sliced into thin strips, or cooked whole and sauteed for 15 minutes then added as a topping to any dish. They can also be added to your favorite dish during the last 15 minutes of cooking. They are excellent in soup, on pizza, risotto, with eggs, in pasta sauce... Below are a few of our favorite recipes.

If you would like to preserve the mushrooms, they can be dried by placing whole mushrooms on a screen in front of a fan or heat source, or in a dehydrator. Dried mushrooms should be sealed in an airtight container and be kept in the dark. Mushrooms can also be preserved by sautéing them and sealing them in an airtight container and freezing.

Black Poplar Mushroom Pasta

- 8 oz Black Poplar mushrooms, sliced
- 8 oz pasta of your choice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small shallot, minced
- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- Salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Cook pasta according to package directions. Reserve about ½ cup of the pasta water before draining.

Heat olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the Black Poplar mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender and lightly browned, about 6–8 minutes. Add the shallot and garlic and cook for another 2 minutes.

Reduce heat to medium-low. Add the remaining butter and heavy cream and stir until warmed through. Add the Parmesan cheese and black pepper. Stir until the cheese melts and the sauce begins to thicken. Add a little reserved pasta water as needed to reach the desired consistency.

Add the cooked pasta and toss until evenly coated. Stir in the parsley and lemon juice. Season with salt and additional pepper to taste. Serve immediately with additional Parmesan if desired.

Garlic Butter Black Poplar Mushrooms on Toast

- 8 oz Black Poplar mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small shallot, thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 4 slices rustic bread
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Trim the very bottom of the mushroom cluster and separate the Black Poplar mushrooms, leaving smaller mushrooms whole and slicing larger mushrooms lengthwise.

Heat olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and cook without stirring for 2–3 minutes to allow them to brown. Stir and continue cooking until the mushrooms are tender and golden, about 5–7 minutes.

Add the remaining butter, shallot, garlic, and thyme. Cook for another 2–3 minutes, stirring frequently. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the lemon juice.

Toast the bread until crisp and golden. Spoon the hot garlic butter mushrooms over each slice. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and fresh parsley. Serve warm.

