

Lion's Mane Mushrooms

Hericium erinaceus · *Hericiaceae* family

DIFFICULTY Moderate
TYPE Sawdust-block fungus
MATURITY 2–8 weeks



LIGHT
Indirect light



MOISTURE
High humidity,
85–95%



SUBSTRATE
Hardwood
sawdust,
supplemented



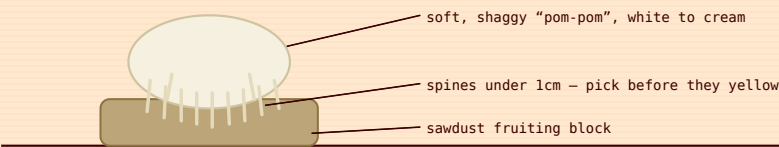
TEMPERATURE
15–21°C for
fruiting



SPAWN
Grain spawn

01 Shaggy white spines

Lion's mane grows as a white, shaggy pom-pom covered in soft spines. Pick it while the spines are short and the flesh is firm and white; it yellows and turns bitter as it ages.



02 Planting

METHOD	Buy a ready-to-fruit sawdust block, cut a slit or X in the bag, and keep it humid and cool. Making your own blocks needs sterilised, supplemented sawdust and grain spawn.
SUBSTRATE	Supplemented hardwood sawdust blocks (bought or home-made), or fresh hardwood logs.
TIMING	Fruits in cool weather, 15–21°C. In warm regions grow in autumn to spring, or in a cool room.
START	A ready-to-fruit block is the easiest way to begin; it fruits within 2–3 weeks of opening.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

04 Problems

- **Too warm** — pins abort or turn yellow above about 24°C; move the block somewhere cool.
- **Dry or drooping spines** — humidity too low; mist the air and use a humidity tent.
- **Green mould** — contamination on the block; bin it and sterilise tools.
- **Picked too late** — old fruit turns yellow, brown and bitter; pick while white and firm.

03 Growing care

- Mist the air, not the fruit; water lodged in the spines causes rot.
- Keep temperatures at 15–21°C; fruit stops forming above about 24°C.
- Give a little indirect light and fresh air.
- After harvest, rest the block and expect one more smaller flush.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Pick when it is white and firm and the spines are still short, under about 1cm.
METHOD	Cut the whole fruit at the base with a clean knife.
AFTERCARE	Rest the block for 1–2 weeks, then expect one more, smaller flush.
STORAGE	Best fresh. In a paper bag in the fridge, 3–5 days.
EATING	Cook thoroughly; pan-fry slices until golden, as the texture is similar to crab or lobster.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying mushrooms for storage) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Shaded verandahCool room	HeatDirect sun	Not applicable — compost spent blocks and start new ones.