

Oyster Mushrooms

Pleurotus ostreatus · *Pleurotaceae* family

DIFFICULTY Easy
TYPE Fast wood-rotting fungus
MATURITY 3–5 weeks



LIGHT
Indirect light



MOISTURE
High humidity,
85–95%



SUBSTRATE
Straw, coffee
grounds,
sawdust



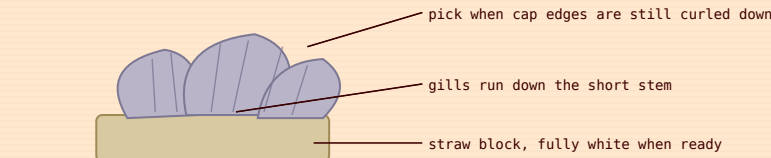
TEMPERATURE
15–25°C, by
strain



SPAWN
Grain spawn,
about 10%

01 Cluster and block

Oyster mushrooms fruit in overlapping clusters from a block of colonised straw. Pick the whole cluster while the cap edges are still curled down and before they release spores.



02 Planting

METHOD	Pasteurise straw in hot water, drain, and mix with about 10% grain spawn by weight into a bag or holed bucket. Keep dark and warm for 10–14 days until white, then move to light.
SUBSTRATE	Pasteurised straw, coffee grounds or hardwood sawdust, damp but not dripping.
TIMING	Year-round indoors or in a shaded verandah. Choose cool-loving strains for winter and warm strains for summer.
START	A ready-made grow kit is the easiest way to begin; spawn and bags are sold by specialist Australian suppliers.

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

- **Green mould** — Trichoderma contamination; bin the block well away from your growing area and sterilise tools.
- **Dry, cracked caps** — humidity too low; mist more often or use a humidity tent.
- **Long stems, tiny caps** — not enough fresh air; ventilate more.
- **Fungus gnats** — larvae in damp substrate; use fine mesh and sticky traps.

03 Growing care

- Mist the block and air twice a day or use a humidity tent; do not soak the pins.
- Give fresh air; stale air makes long stems with tiny caps.
- Keep out of direct sun and draughts, which dry the caps.
- After harvest, rest the block, then soak overnight to trigger another flush.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Pick when cap edges are still curled down and just starting to flatten, before spores drop.
METHOD	Twist or cut the whole cluster at the base with a clean knife.
AFTERCARE	Rest the block 1–2 weeks, soak overnight, and expect 1–2 more smaller flushes. Compost the spent block.
STORAGE	Fresh in a paper bag in the fridge, 5–7 days. Sauté and freeze, or dry, for longer.
EATING	Cook thoroughly; oyster mushrooms are not eaten raw.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying mushrooms for storage) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Shaded verandah

Compost bin

AVOID NEARBY

Direct sun

Draughts

ROTATION NOTE

Not applicable — compost spent blocks and start new ones from clean substrate.