

Wine Cap Mushrooms

Stropharia rugosoannulata · *Strophariaceae* family

DIFFICULTY Easy
TYPE Garden-bed fungus
MATURITY 3–6 months



LIGHT
Dappled shade



MOISTURE
Damp chip, rain
or watering



SUBSTRATE
Hardwood chip,
straw



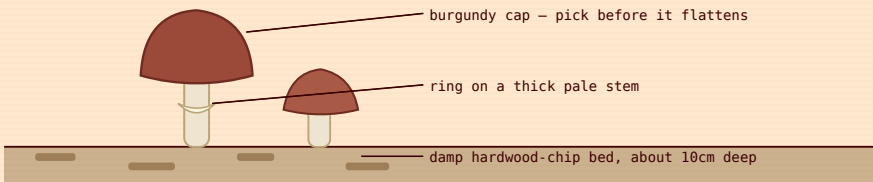
TEMPERATURE
10–25°C, cool
wet spells



SPAWN
Sawdust spawn,
about 1L per m²

01 Wine cap anatomy

Wine caps have a burgundy-red cap and a thick pale stem with a distinctive ring. They fruit from a bed of damp hardwood chip, and are best picked young.



02 Planting

METHOD	Spread a 10cm layer of damp chip, scatter and lightly mix in spawn at about 1L per m ² , then cover with 5cm of chip or straw.
SUBSTRATE	Fresh hardwood chip, ideally mixed with some straw. Avoid pine and cypress.
TIMING	Spawn in autumn or early spring. Mushrooms fruit in cool, wet spells 3–6 months later.
SPOT	Choose a shaded bed under trees or beside vegetable beds; wine caps double as a living mulch.

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

- **Drying out** — hot dry spells stop growth; water and keep a thick layer of chip.
- **Slugs and snails** — graze the caps; pick often and use traps.
- **Wild fungi** — other mushrooms, some poisonous, can appear in woodchip; identify every one before eating.
- **Slow spawn run** — cold or too-dry chip delays colonisation; keep damp and be patient.

03 Growing care

- Keep the bed damp, watering during dry spells.
- Top up with fresh chip each year to feed the fungus.
- Keep the bed shaded; hot sun dries it out.
- Pick young and often for the best flavour.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Pick when the cap is burgundy-red and still rounded, before it flattens and the ring drops.
METHOD	Twist and pull, or cut at the base of the thick stem, and brush off chip.
AFTERCARE	None needed. Leave the bed undisturbed; it will fruit again for several seasons.
STORAGE	Best fresh. In a paper bag in the fridge, 3–5 days.
EATING	Cook thoroughly; best used young. Never eat any mushroom you cannot identify with certainty.
PRESERVING	See Dehydrating (drying mushrooms for storage) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY

Tomato

Brassicas

Corn

AVOID NEARBY

Pine mulch

ROTATION NOTE

Not applicable — top up the chip yearly; after a few seasons compost the bed material.