



Oyster Mushroom Grow Block Instructions

Oyster mushrooms are the easiest varieties to grow and tolerate a wide range of temperatures. If you cannot open your block right away, **put it in the fridge where it can stay for up to 3 months**. This cannot be done with Pink Oyster which will not survive temperatures below 10°C but is fine at room temperature for a few days. We use these blocks to grow all the mushrooms on our farm. They contain over 4.5kg of our all-natural substrate made with W.A. Eucalyptus, legumes and rain water. Below are the optimal fruiting temperatures for our strains however they can still fruit in colder temperatures with slowed growth. They can also tolerate roughly 5°C warmer temperatures than the maximums temporarily.

Italian Oyster: 12–30°C

Yellow Oyster: 16–32°C

Pink Oyster: 16–32°C

- ❖ Oyster mushrooms need light to grow properly and develop their colours. Ambient natural light is best but any household lights will work fine. **Direct sunlight will dry the block out.**
- ❖ The best location is usually a bathroom used for showers since this keeps your block humid and can also make it easier to remember to spray 2-3 times per day. A bathroom floor or vanity works great.
- ❖ Air-conditioning and heating systems decrease the relative humidity of the air and can cause your mushrooms to dry out and stop growing. When baby mushrooms dry out, they will die and need to be removed before your block will try again if you keep it humid.
- ❖ While it is possible to fruit them outside in certain conditions such as a greenhouse, you will usually run into problems with fruit flies etc.

1. Opening:

Your block will be marked with an X where we recommend cutting it open for the best results. Use a clean knife or box cutter. You will see growth happening inside the bag away from the cut area and this is totally normal. **Do not make additional cuts where you see this growth.** With our Oyster mushroom blocks, the cut should be facing upwards with the mushrooms growing vertically for the maximum yield.

2. Fruiting:

All you need to do is lightly mist the cut at least 2-3 times per day with a spray bottle of water - rain or filtered water is best but tap water also works fine. Spray a fine mist over the cut and surrounding plastic to increase the humidity and protect the delicate mushrooms as they begin to form. If you opted for a humidity bag, first roll down the top a few times so that it stays open to allow fresh air exchange for your mushrooms. Only roll it down enough to make the opening somewhat rigid but still leave a large enclosure for your mushrooms to grow inside. Place the bag upright on a flat surface and then place your grow block inside with the cut facing upwards. Mist inside the walls of the humidity bag as well as the plastic around the cut on your block. The block will produce pins (baby mushrooms) near the cut within 1 week which will naturally force it open. If you grow more than one block in the same room, it can be best to leave the door open or else the CO₂ exhaled by your mushrooms will build up. Insufficient oxygen will cause Oyster mushrooms to develop long stems and other malformations depending on the species. Bare in mind that too much airflow can also cause problems, evaporating moisture from your mushrooms and drying them out.

3. Harvesting:

Your mushrooms will usually be ready for harvest 6-10 days after opening the block but the speed is affected by many factors such as the average temperature. For all Oyster mushrooms, the best time to harvest is when the edges of their caps are still slightly downturned, before they flatten or turn upwards and release their spores which can make a mess. They will have a shorter fridge life when left until their caps flatten or upturn. Oyster mushrooms release huge amounts of spores when left for too long which you may see as a pale coloured “dust” collecting around the block. The best way to harvest Oyster mushrooms is to simply place your hand behind them at their base and pull them gently off the substrate. After harvesting, remove any leftover bits of mushrooms from the block as these will decompose, affecting later flushes. You can find photos of mushrooms ready to harvest on our website or Facebook/Instagram: [@skipworthmushrooms](#)

4. Storage & Cooking:

Your freshly harvested mushrooms need to go straight in the fridge. A sealed container with some paper towels inside or a closed paper bag works best. Freshly harvested Italian Oyster mushrooms will usually last about a week in the fridge but the Pink and Yellow varieties have a shorter fridge life of 2-3 days before they start to go bad. It's important to fry Oyster mushrooms in a single layer and we recommend a medium heat with plenty of butter or olive oil to avoid burning which causes bitterness. Fry until golden brown on one side, then add salt, flip them over and salt them again on the other side to release moisture and get them crispy. Optional seasonings like garlic and cumin seeds are great for frying. Fried Oyster mushrooms make a delicious standalone dish or the perfect meaty addition to sandwiches and salads. They are also great in soups, pastas, stir fries or any recipe calling for mushrooms.

5. Additional flushes:

Your block can produce 3-4 smaller flushes after your large first flush depending on the environment and level of care. After a harvest, keep misting the block every day and you will begin to see the formation of new pins after about 3-7 days. If you are using a humidity bag, you may want to clean or turn your bag inside-out after the first flush to provide a cleaner environment for your second flush. If the block seems dry after a few flushes, it can be soaked for a few hours in a sink or large container which can help it to produce some more mushrooms. As the mycelium continues to consume the nutrients in the substrate, the harvests will become gradually smaller. For this reason, we only keep these blocks in our grow room for 2 flushes before they are added to our compost pile.

6. Compost:

Once the mushroom block has stopped producing flushes, this “mushroom compost” can be spread in your garden as an excellent soil conditioner and mulch. It can be mixed in at 25-50% with potting soil or mulch - using mushroom compost alone can result in nutrient levels becoming too high for most plants. However, some plants such as capsicums and chillies like to be planted with 100% mushroom compost only and huge yields can be achieved this way. For gardens or farms, it can be spread in a 5cm thick layer or incorporated into the top 10-30cm of soil to conserve water, provide slow release nutrition and increase resistance to heat/erosion/wind. It is rich in nitrogen and known to be particularly effective at increasing orchard yields through the restoration of mycorrhizae. Much more information can be found online about the applications and benefits of mushroom compost.

Questions about your block? The best way to contact us is via Instagram or Facebook messages. You can find alternate contacts and learn more on our website: skipworthmushrooms.au