

Mushroom Grow Bag

Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum* or *curtissii*)

Difficulty Level = **Intermediate**

Your Mushroom Grow Bag has been sealed with 5 lbs of sterilized spawn-inoculated substrate. Over time, the mycelium will grow, emitting CO₂ in the process. When your bag arrives it may be inflated or become inflated but the filter patch on the bag allows for some gaseous exchange while preventing contamination, so it won't over-inflate.



In ideal conditions each mushroom bag's beginning **dry** substrate weight (~ 2 lbs) equals the weight that you should get in mushrooms! Yum!

Be sure to follow the directions carefully!

Storing your bag:

Store your bag unopened at room temperature until you are ready to fruit it. To store for more than a week, refrigeration is best. In general, the warmer it is the faster development occurs. If your bag is full of white mycelium, then it is ready to fruit. If it is mostly brown substrate, then leave the bag alone until the mycelium has grown more.

Remember: The bag contains a living organism and can die if you neglect it too long. Once the mycelium has spread throughout the bag, the fungi needs moisture, light and fresh air.

Red Reishi:

- *Medicinal mushroom*
- In a sealed bag, which has high CO₂, the Reishi will form "antlers". These antlers have traditional medicinal uses. You can let the antler form grow in the bag if you want to harvest them.
- When you do cut the bag open and fresh air enters, the form will change from antler form to the typical shelf fungus ("conk") form and grow from the slit or the top of the block.

Fruiting your Reishi bag:

1. Set the bag on a dinner plate, tray or in a shallow plastic container. Mushrooms need light and consistent humidity so keep your block somewhere you'll see it often, like the kitchen, a bathroom or laundry room.
2. If you want to grow in antler form (greater medicinal value) – do not open the bag, the antlers will grow in the closed bag. When you are ready to harvest the antlers, cut a hole a few inches long just below the impulse seal. Harvest the antlers and close back up with clothes pins.
3. If you want to grow in shelf form – open the bag just above the filter patch & drape with reemay fabric.
4. Once the fabric is draped over the bag, make sure to mist the fabric a couple of times a day to keep it damp. If your bag is not yet producing you can water it every other day.
5. Wait for the mushrooms to grow! (This will take a few weeks).
6. The Reishi will grow out of the slits in a shelf shape. To harvest, twist and pull the Reishi off right where they come off the block.

7. If you want more “antlers” to form, cut the top of the bag off right below the impulse seal (at the very top), harvest the “antlers” that are ready to harvest and close the top of the bag with a few clothes pins or tape. The “antlers” are slow to form. It can take up to 8 weeks.

Follow directions below for more information about caring for your bag.

Humidity: High humidity is essential for growing healthy mushrooms. After you cut slits in the bag, moisten the enclosed reemay fabric and keep it draped over your open mushroom bag at all times. Mist the fabric a couple of times a day to keep it damp. You can also increase humidity by placing the bag in a loosely covered plastic tub containing a few inches of moistened peat moss, potting soil, sponges, perlite, or anything else that absorbs water and then tenting the fabric over it.

Light: Light quality is important and the most commonly overlooked. The best is natural light through a window which is indirect. Other possible sources include florescent or LED lights.

Fresh Air and Temperature: Fresh air allows for normal development of most mushrooms. By cutting the bag open you are providing the spawn with plenty of fresh air to grow. Fruiting temperatures of at least 70°F are ideal, but no greater than 90. Keeping the fresh air to a minimum will help in the formation of the “antlers.”

Harvesting & Usage Notes: To harvest, twist and pull, trying not to damage the block in the process. DO NOT CUT INTO THE BLOCK (it can create contamination)! Reishi mushrooms are medicinal mushrooms that are used for teas and tinctures. The Chinese call it the mushroom of immortality.

Once your mushroom block starts producing, it will be at its highest production during the first 3 months. Eventually though, your block will contaminate. This is normal. You might observe green or black mold, similar to what you would see on cheese or bread, growing on the surface of the block.

Of course, never consume a mushroom that you haven't positively identified!

Have questions, problems, or would you like more information on how to expand your bag after it is done fruiting?... Contact Chris Parker at ashevillefungi@gmail.com



Shelf form of Reishi



Antler form of Reishi