



# Mushroom Guide

BY

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Mushrooms are mysterious creatures. They are **neither plants nor animals**, but independent organisms that have always fueled our imagination. Exciting myths and stories surround them. Mushrooms **play an important role in the forest**: they decompose wood, nourish trees, and **are essential for a healthy ecosystem**. Anyone who dives deeper into the world of mushrooms discovers not only **delicious edible varieties** but also learns to **see the forest from an entirely new perspective**.



# What you should always keep in mind when foraging mushrooms

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Foraging for mushrooms is more than just a walk in the woods – it's a little treasure hunt. But before you head out, you should know a few important basic rules. Because even though many mushrooms are harmless and delicious, just as many are inedible or even dangerously poisonous.

## Important tips for mushroom foraging:

- Only collect mushrooms you can identify with certainty – mix-ups can be dangerous.
- Use the website [123pilze.de](https://www.123pilze.de) to double-check your finds at home.
- Only take young, fresh mushrooms – old ones may be spoiled.
- Cut mushrooms with a knife or gently twist them to protect the mycelium.
- Collect them in a basket and sort them again (safe – edible / uncertain – double-check).
- Take only as many mushrooms as you need and respect nature conservation rules.

## What to avoid:

- Never taste unknown mushrooms. Take one home and identify it on [123pilze.de](https://www.123pilze.de) instead.
- Don't trample or pluck mushrooms unnecessarily. Even poisonous or old mushrooms have their role in the ecosystem.
- Avoid collecting mushrooms by the roadside – they may be contaminated with pollutants.



# What kinds of mushrooms are there?

In Central Europe, several thousand mushroom species grow – most of them inconspicuous, some inedible, many beautiful, and only a small portion edible. Generally, we distinguish between:

Porcini



Chanterelle

Parasol



## Edible mushrooms

e.g. porcini, chanterelle, parasol – aromatic, digestible, and a wonderful addition to your kitchen.



Bitter Boletus

## Inedible mushrooms

Not poisonous, but taste bad or are hard to digest.



Green death cap

## Poisonous mushrooms

Can cause serious poisoning – from stomach problems to life-threatening organ damage.



Fly agaric

## Psychoactive mushrooms

Some species (e.g. fly agaric) contain hallucinogenic substances – their consumption is risky.

# Beginner mushrooms in profile



Porcini



Chestnut bolete

## Boletes

- **Distinguishing features:** sponge-like pores, brown cap, firm white stem with pale net pattern.
- **Popular because:** firm flesh, nutty aroma.
- **Risk of confusion:** low – but beware of the bitter bolete, extremely bitter (inedible/harmless).

## Shaggy Ink Cap

- **Distinguishing features:** white, narrow mushroom with scaly cap that “melts” with age, releasing an inky liquid.
- **Special feature:** edible when young – but only keeps for a short time. Once it turns black, inedible.
- **Warning:** the Common Ink Cap is incompatible with alcohol and can cause severe reactions!



## Parasol

(Giant Parasol Mushroom)

- **Distinguishing features:** very large cap with scaly surface, up to 30 cm wide. Hollow stem with a movable ring.
- **Habitat:** meadows, forest edges, clearings.
- **Risk of confusion:** with smaller parasols, some of which are poisonous – always check the ring and cap pattern!
- **Culinary tip:** delicious breaded and fried like a schnitzel.



## Hedgehog Mushroom

- **Distinguishing features:** instead of gills, small, soft spines/teeth under the cap; cap color from pale ocher to yellow; often wavy.
- **Habitat:** from July to October in deciduous and coniferous forests, often in groups.
- **Risk of confusion:** very low – ideal beginner’s mushroom.
- **Culinary tip:** harvest young, fry in plant-based butter; mild, nutty taste with firm texture – don’t overcook.

# Takeaway

Mushroom foraging is a wonderful hobby for nature lovers – it combines outdoor activity with culinary delight. The key to safe foraging is knowledge, patience, and respect for nature. Start with a few easily recognizable species – and when in doubt: don't pick it!



## Quick preparation tips for foraged mushrooms

- Never eat mushrooms raw! (Exception: cultivated button mushrooms).
- Always cook thoroughly – this kills potential pathogens and improves digestibility.
- Avoid metal containers or spoons – mushrooms react sensitively to metal and may spoil faster.

## Mushroom identification with 123pilze.de

You get an overview with various characteristics, such as:

Cap shape / color / gills / pores / spines / spore color / stem features / smell / habitat (e.g. forest type or season).

Try to capture as many traits as possible; this rules out more and more species. In the end, only a few options should remain. You can then check whether there are poisonous look-alikes.

## Wohllebens Waldakademie

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