

# ENTHEOGENESIS AUSTRALIS

## How to make a spore print

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With the onset of Autumn comes fungus season, with mushrooms of all shapes, sizes and colours. To the uninitiated eye, these can mushrooms can all blend into each other, particularly those that even mycologists refer to as LBM's (little brown mushrooms). To properly identify a mushroom, we rely on a number of features such as where it grows and what it grows from, the colour and texture of the cap, the colour of the gills and how they are attached to the stem, and whether the stem is fibrous or fragile. An additional diagnostic aid is the colour of the spore print - spores come in various colours, white, pink, brown, black, purple, or in some cases, differing colours based on the light. Many species can be confused with others, and a spore print can help tell species apart.

Plants have seeds, and mushrooms have spores. The purpose of the mushroom is to release these spores into their surroundings. Spore prints are best made in humid conditions, as many mushrooms depend on the humidity for spore ejection. Spores are tiny and microscopic, so it can take a little while for spores to be deposited.

Mushroom spores can sometimes be seen without making a spore print. You might notice spores in the bags you have used to store mushrooms, on top of mushrooms growing beneath a larger mushroom, or on mushroom stems.

### What you will need

- A fresh mushroom
- 1 piece of paper, foil, or a glass slide for each mushroom
- 1 cup or small bowl with a larger diameter than your mushroom cap
- 1 sharp knife or scalpel



### Method

1. Using a knife remove the stem from the mushroom where the stem meets the cap.
2. Place the cap with the gills down on your paper/foil/glass slide.
3. Place the cup/small bowl upside down over the cap.



4. Let sit for 6-12 hours while the spores are deposited.



5. Remove the cup/small bowl then carefully remove the mushroom cap.



7. Cover the paper/foil/glass slide (on which you should now see a spore print!) with the cup/small bowl.
8. If you wish to store the print for later use, let the print dry 6-12 hours.
9. Remove the bowl and enjoy your spore print.



**Please Note:** We ask that you are mindful of where you forage.

Mycology in Australia has been poorly represented, and our understanding of the species present in many environments is limited. If you are looking for specific species, please do not pick mushrooms that do not fit the description

of your target species, and please choose your target species in consultation with the mycological community. Picking mushrooms may harm the environment, especially picking unidentified mushrooms in large hauls. If you are seeking identification of mushrooms, we ask that you take photographs of the cap, stem and gills (the forward-facing camera on your phone can be a useful tool for this, as can a makeup mirror, dental mirror, or bicycle/bicycle helmet rear view mirror) without picking the specimen for your iNaturalist or social media request. Facebook groups local to your region can be a fantastic resource for identification, allowing you to determine the identity of your finds rapidly.

Don't forget that it is important to wait for a consensus from trusted community members before removing or consuming mushrooms from the field. This consensus is not just important for your health and legal reasons, but also to ensure protection of the environment.

Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act), the removal of any biological material from public land without a collection permit is illegal and may result in a fine. There is the possibility of an additional offence if police are notified.

### Disclaimer

*This document cannot cover all information regarding this diverse area of study. This document is only a starting point and should be used in conjunction with other evidence concerning ethnobotanical plants, fungi and related compounds.*

*Ethnobotanicals and ethnomycologicals have risks and benefits and should always be treated with caution and respect. Some practices and ideas associated with the use of ethnobotanicals are embedded in cultural and religious traditions.*

*Research, due diligence, and caution are essential. Ensure to understand local laws, traditions, and sustainability before working with any ethnobotanicals*

### Who we are

Entheogenesis Australis (EGA) is a charitable, educational organisation established in 2004. We provide opportunities for critical thinking and knowledge sharing on ethnobotanical plants, fungi, nature and sustainability.

We also encourage gardening and the conservation of plants, fungi and seeds that have a traditional relationship with humankind. We aim to celebrate culture, science, art, politics, and community around medicine plants through our conferences, workshops and resources.

[entheogenesis.org](http://entheogenesis.org) [gardenstates.org](http://gardenstates.org)

If you find this resource helpful, please consider supporting the work of EGA.

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