

What Is Mushroom Hunting?

Mushroom hunting is just one of the terms used to describe searching for wild mushrooms. Other terms include mushrooming, mushroom picking, and mushroom **foraging**. In the wild, mushrooms grow only in particular places at certain times of the year. Some mushrooms, for example, are found only near particular tree **species**. Mushrooms are hunted throughout Europe, Asia, and North America.

Glossary words are in **bold** and are defined on page 18.

Becoming a successful mushroom hunter is difficult. In many countries, mushroom-hunting skills are passed down from parents to children. Learning to positively identify **edible** mushrooms is important, because many mushroom species are deadly. Deadly mushrooms can look almost exactly like edible mushrooms. A microscope is sometimes needed to distinguish edible mushrooms from deadly ones.



Warning! Never eat a mushroom found growing outdoors unless you are with an experienced mushroom hunter. Remember that experienced mushroom hunters have taken years to learn mushroom identification. Never give a wild mushroom to anyone else. When you see a mushroom growing outdoors, observe it, but leave it alone.

Most mushroom hunters gather (or pick) the mushrooms they find to cook and eat. Mushrooms may also be hunted but are not gathered. Finding a particular mushroom species is a special skill that takes years of practice. Mushroom hunters not only know much about mushrooms;

they also know a lot about mushroom **habitat**. Mushrooms are found in fields, forests, yards, and even near the ocean. The next time you see mushrooms growing outdoors, stop and observe them. But remember, don't touch them!