

HOW TO MAKE SHIITAKE MUSHROOM LOGS “CHEAT SHEET”

Whole-Fed Homestead • Full instructional video on YouTube @wholefedhomestead

LOGS

*Wood living but dormant, freshly cut no more than 2 months ago, but aged 2 weeks before inoculating.
Keep logs outside, covered with a tarp to stay moist, and out of sun between harvest and inoculation day.*

Best: All species of Oak. Good: Alder, American & Blue Beach, Hornbeam, Ironwood, Hard Maple, Sweet Gum.
Satisfactory: Basswood, Bitternut Hickory, Butternut, Sulphur Bud, Black & Paper Birch, Black Gum, Tupelo, Cherry, Eucalyptus, Soft Maple (Silver & Red), Sassafras, Sourwood.

MATERIALS

- 25 logs, 36-48” long and 3-8” diameter
- 5.5 pound bag of Shiitake Sawdust Spawn
- Angle Grinder (preferred) or Drill
- Angle Grinder Bit Adapter (if using angle grinder)
- 12.5 mm Soft Steel Screw Tip Bit with Stop Collar
- Palm Style Brass Inoculator
- 2.5 pounds of Cheese Wax
- 2 Wool Daubers
- Container for holding sawdust spawn
- Something for melting the wax
- Safety goggles
- Straw (optional)

HOW TO MAKE MUSHROOM LOGS

Wait until the danger of frost is gone, and temperatures are reliably in the 40°s (F).

1. Drill Holes

Drill holes 1” deep in the logs, 6” apart in the rows, with rows spaced 2” apart and offset.
Work 1 to 2 logs at a time, making sure to finish every step quickly before starting the next.

2. Fill Holes

Pack the inoculator tip with spawn, and whack the top of the tool sharply to expel the plug into the hole; repeat.
Holes should be filled up completely so they are flush with the log surface.
If the sawdust gets too packed in the container, fluff it up as needed.

3. Cover Holes

Melt the cheese wax in an electric deep fryer or a pot on the stove (careful with an open flame).
Dip the wool dauber into the wax and tap over the holes to seal; cover several holes before dipping again.
Double check to make sure there are no open pin holes in the wax seals.
Seal any defects, knicks, cut surfaces of the log with wax; do not seal the ends of the logs with wax.

4. Finish

Label the logs if using more than 1 variety of spawn.
Allow the logs to sit until the wax fully hardens, about 30 minutes.

5. Incubation

Move logs to the incubation area the same day they are inoculated.
Requirements: full shade and low to the ground but not touching the ground.
Optional: Cover with a layer of straw to help keep in moisture.
Leave for 1 year; water weekly if it doesn't rain.

6. Log Set Up & Maintenance

Set up the logs for harvest in very early spring about 1 year after they were inoculated.
Requirements: mostly shaded, not touching the ground, somewhere you walk by often.
Water the logs deeply every week if it doesn't rain.