

Mushroom Hunter's Checklist for Walks

For Collecting:

Basket
Sturdy knife for cutting mushrooms or digging up the root
Paper, cloth or waxed paper bags to separate and store mushrooms.
(Not plastic, which melts them.)
Book for Mushroom Identification
Magnifying glass or jeweler's loupe
Small notebook and pen, or dictate notes into your phone.
Camera

For Safety and Comfort:

Insect Repellent
Water Bottle
Whistle, in case you're separated from the group or lost.
Cell phone (These don't always work in the woods.)

Optional, but come in handy:

Kerchief (many uses)
Wet wipes
Small plastic perforated boxes like berries or cherry tomatoes come in
Plastic mesh bags from onions or fruit, with twist-ties
Small Mesh bags with zippers like those sold for laundering small items
Some folks carry tin foil to wrap large or fragile mushrooms.

Pick fresh specimens. Don't pick old, wilted mushrooms, which are hard to identify. Leave them to drop their spores.

To see a mushroom's life cycle, try to find 3 of the same species in different stages of development (e.g. egg or button stage, curved cap on stem, flat cap open fully).

Take notes on habitat and substrate (what it's growing on).

Habitat: Hardwood / conifer / mixed forest, lawn, roadside, near water, swamp.

Substrate, on the ground: Soil, humus, leaf litter, needle duff, moss, dung.

Substrate, wood: Live /dead tree, stump, log / branch on ground, twig, root, buried wood.

Pictures can help you remember habitat. Photograph ground cover, wood, tree leaves, or surroundings such as streams.

Hints:

Check Goodwill Stores or Dollar Stores for inexpensive baskets and sturdy knives.

Save paper pharmacy bags for collecting.

Save return envelopes you don't use from credit offers or bills. Seal, cut in half to make 2 envelopes for small mushrooms.

Make a sheath for your knife out of Styrofoam meat trays.