



Mushroom Prints

Mushrooms may look like they are closely related to plants however, they are more closely related to us than to plants. One thing that makes mushrooms different is that they have spores instead of seeds. The color of a mushroom's spores can be helpful for identifying the fungus. But how can you see the spores without a microscope? You can make a spore print!

To make a spore print you will need a mushroom with a cap, one piece of white paper, one piece of dark colored paper (black works best), a cup or something similar to cover the mushroom cap, and a safe dry place to set it.

- To make a spore print, the first thing you need to do is find a mushroom with a cap.
- Pick the mushroom and remove its cap from the stalk.
- Take the mushroom home and place a piece of white paper under half of the cap and a piece of dark paper under the other half.
- Place the cup over top of the cap, this will prevent wind from blowing the spores away.
- Leave the cap in a still, safe, and dry place for a few days.
- After a few days carefully remove the cup and the cap.
- Check out the spore print! What color are the spores?
- If you would like to keep and preserve your spore print, spray it with a little bit of hair spray.

Spore prints aren't just for identification, they are also cool looking!

Make sure to wash your hands after handling any mushrooms you pick.

