

clover food lab



Max here. Today's Veggie Monster protagonist isn't technically a veggie - or at least - it isn't a *plant*. We're talking about the wild and wonderful world of mushrooms! Mushrooms are part of the magical eukaryotic kingdom known as Fungi, distinguished from plants and animals. They're the composters of the landscape: Fungi grow in wildly complicated and connected networks, working together to break down dead matter and repurpose nutrients for the broader ecosystem.

The Clover team once got a chance to visit [RI Mushroom Company](#) where we learned from Mike (owner) and Todd (mushroom scientist) that mushrooms can even break down heavy metals and clean oil spills.

As intriguing as mushrooms are ecologically, they also are complex and delicious. I hear a lot from people that they like trying mushrooms, but they don't always know what to do with them. So I thought I'd share a couple quick tips on storing and cleaning, and a super simple formula for my favorite mushroom snack.

A quick note - if you haven't been to [The Mushroom Shop](#) in Somerville, it's an amazing place full of foraged and farmed mushrooms. Tyler (the owner) brought some really cool mushrooms to our Assembly Row location last week and shared his unending wealth of knowledge about them. Stop by and ask for recommendations or pickup some mushroom literature to dive deeper into the topic.

If Somerville is difficult to get to for you, check your nearby specialty food store; it's also easy to find high quality dried mushrooms online.

Once you've got your shrooms, it's time to clean and store them! You'll want to be pretty careful with water at this point. I'd avoid soaking, this can make them soggy. If they look particularly dirty (which is likely considering they live in the dirt) give them a quick rinse and wipe off with a clean towel. If they're mostly clean, I like to use a dry vegetable brush to dust off any remaining sediment.

You'll also want to avoid storing them in a container that is airtight! Too much moisture trapped inside can cause mushrooms to get slimy. A humble paper bag is the perfect option here, and I'd even throw in a couple paper towels if your fridge is particularly humid. You should get at least a week of storage out of them that way, though I'm usually too impatient to save them for more than a day :)

Now - for the fun part. **Eating them!** I love mushrooms, and when I cook them I usually feature them up front as the star of the show. A simple way to do this is by pairing them with the perfect condiment or dipping sauce. It's also a great first course if you're having guests and want something to munch on before dinner is ready. This works best with mushrooms like porcini, king oyster, or lion's mane - you want them to have wide enough surface area when cut to sear nicely.

1. Grab a stainless steel skillet and heat 1 tbs of butter and olive oil over medium heat.
2. Grab your clean mushrooms and tear or slice into bite-size chunks.
3. Once the fat in your pan is hot enough to sizzle, place the mushrooms in face-down.
4. Let them cook undisturbed for about 3 minutes - we want a golden crispy crust.
5. Things should start to smell pretty good at this point - grab a beverage, it's almost shroom time!
6. Once the bottoms are golden and crispy, carefully flip them to the other side and cook for 2 more minutes.
7. While you're waiting, grab or make your favorite condiment! I like to combine soy sauce, rice vinegar, dehydrated garlic, chopped green onions, and sesame.
8. Once your mushrooms are crispy on both sides, take them out of the pan and give them a sprinkle of flaky salt. They should be crispy on the outside, custardy on the inside. Enjoy!

Bonus: Rethinking your home decor? Here's an [extremely cute mushroom lamp](#) for any die-hard fungi fans.

