

What Is Mushroom Compost?

Mushroom compost is the growing material that's left over from the process of growing mushrooms on an industrial scale. It's sometimes referred to as '**spent mushroom compost**'.

Why Is It Useful?

There are plenty of reasons to use mushroom compost in your garden and only a few reasons why you shouldn't. Let's start with the reasons why:

1) It feeds your plants

Mushroom compost is a slow release nourishing fertilizer. It supplies beneficial fungi, bacteria and micro-organisms into the soil. If you spread mushroom compost through the garden or used it as mulch, your plants probably won't need additional fertilizer feedings.

2) It's versatile

You can mix mushroom compost into vegetable beds prior to planting or you can put it around plants that are in situ – this is known as 'top-dressing'.

3) It's organic

Mushroom compost is mostly derived from organic substrates including high quality peat moss. You won't need to worry about chemicals leaching into your veggies or affecting wildlife.

4) It holds water

Mushroom compost is organic matter and holds moisture. We're all trying to cut back on our water usage, so soil that can retain moisture is good for the environment.

Moisture retention also improves the life of your plants because it stabilizes the changes between dry to wet seasonal conditions.

5) No Pests

Mushroom compost is steam pasteurized before its removed from the mushroom growing house. It will not introduce pests or pathogens into your garden.

6) Mushroom compost is guaranteed weed-free.

7) No viruses

Pests and weeds are not the only issues our plants have to fight off. Viruses can kill plants quickly. Mushroom compost is virus-free and it helps to produce a vigorous plant that is more able to can fight off infections.

8) It prevents surface compaction

Soil surface is easily compacted by sun, rain, and foot tread, but mushroom compost can prevent the soil surface from crusting over and compacting. This aids rain absorption and encourages worms to generate healthy and a crumbly soil.

9) It's a drainage aid

Mushroom compost can improve chalky, clay or compacted soils so that water runs freely. This means your plants won't get waterlogged and drowned out. Rotting roots can destroy the toughest of plants.

10) It has super weed suppressant powers

If you apply a thick layer of mushroom compost as mulch it blocks out light and kills off weeds. This is a big bonus for the busy gardeners who don't have time to deal with nutrient stealing dandelions, creeping buttercup and mare's tail.

11) It doesn't smell bad

Yes, mushroom compost is made from organic matter, but it doesn't smell bad. When you first open the bag, it may smell musty or 'dark' but it certainly doesn't stink. Once it's on the garden any lingering smell disappears.

Why You Shouldn't Use Mushroom Compost

There are a few plants that are not keen on the alkaline properties of mushroom compost. This includes fruit bushes and acid loving plants like camellia, rhododendron, heathers and magnolia. If you have put mushroom compost around these plants and noticed yellowing leaves it points to a nutrient deficiency. Dig out the mushroom compost and get some acid-based compost in there promptly.