

## Mushrooms



Although they can be unsightly in a plush lawn, mushrooms can actually be beneficial for grass. Mushrooms feed on decaying material and in doing so, release nutrients into the ground. If there is the presence of abundant moisture (usually after an extended rainy period, high humidity, and/or cool weather) and decaying organic matter in the soil you could see mushrooms popping up like your own little Smurf Village. Organic matter is found in soil of healthy lawns. When matter such as leaves, bark, tree roots, animal waste, and grass clippings decompose in the soil, these fungi naturally occur.

Mushrooms are, for the most part, harmless and even beneficial. The main concern of most property owners are that mushrooms are poisonous and pose a risk to dogs or toddlers that may take a taste of a few. The good thing is that the vast majority of lawn mushrooms aren't poisonous.

It's not possible to eliminate mushroom growth in your lawn. There is always something decaying in soil. Removing all of that decomposing organic matter would actually be detrimental to the lawn anyway.

"So what do I do?" There is only one practical method to remove mushrooms from a lawn and that is mechanical removal (mowing, raking, pulling, kicking, practicing your golf swing). Removal of mushrooms is only a consideration if they are identified as a poisonous variety, which again, is unlikely. You can also consult with the extension office at your local university. As conditions change, the mushrooms will disappear. Since they need moisture to grow, as the area dries out mushrooms will disappear.

