

MUSHROOMS IN THE LAWN

Have mushrooms claimed a foothold in your lawn?

Mushrooms are the fruiting structure of fungi that live in the soil. These fungi help decay organic matter in the soil; such as leaves roots and wood. These fungi may be present for years without sending up mushrooms. They require warm wet conditions to develop the mushroom or toadstools as they are sometime called. In an average to dry year, they may not show up at all.

But what can be done about the mushrooms? Unfortunately, there is very little that can be done to eradicate mushrooms. Pesticides have no effect on mushrooms; as the major portion of the fungi is deep in the soil and cannot be reached. You can try digging down to remove whatever is decaying in the soil but sometimes the pieces of organic matter are so small that it is impossible to remove them, if they can be found at all. You can also rake up the mushrooms to improve the appearance of the lawn but this will not eliminate them either.

Mushrooms will eventually disappear on their own once the organic matter is decayed. Never eat mushrooms. Most mushrooms that might grow in the lawn are not edible and may be poisonous. In many cases, only a mycologist or fungi specialist can tell the difference.

The **Master Gardener Hotline** is open from April to October, Monday through Friday. Lines are available 9:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at 888-678-3464

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