

Identification Key to the Most Common North American Genera

Compiled by Antonio Cillero Rodrigo, 2020

Key to pink and dark-spored, gilled mushrooms: [Mushroomexpert key for dark-spored, gilled mushrooms](#)

Does it have ...?	Go to
1. Pink spores	2
1. Brown spores	5
1. Purple-brown spores	14
1. Black spores	17
1. Light-colored spores	20 (next page)
2. Free gills; growing on wood	3
2. Attached gills	4
2. Decurrent gills; pale pink spore print	Clitopilus
2. Lateral stalk	<i>Phyllotopsis</i>
3. Has a volva	Volvariella
3. Doesn't have a volva	Pluteus
4. Large and fleshy, growing on ground or well-rotten wood, usually notched gills	Entoloma
4. Small, with convex to flat, often depressed or umbilicate cap	Leptonia
4. Small, with conical cap with an elongated apex (tip)	Nolanea
4. Small to medium-sized; convex to flat cap; pale pinkish-buff spore print	Rhodocollybia
5. With cortina; growing on the ground; rusty brown spore print	6
5. Ring present	7
5. No ring or cortina	11
6. Fruiting body usually violet/brown, growing on the ground	Cortinarius
6. Fruiting body yellow, orange, red or olive; smooth and dry cap, non-bulbous stem	Dermocybe
7. Growing on wood	8
7. Growing on the ground	10
8. Cap often scaly and colorful; dark brown spore print; with rings or ring zones	Pholiota
8. Cap smooth	9
9. Large fruiting body; thick stem; orange to orange-brown spore print	Gymnopilus
9. Small fruiting body; often with dry cap; slender and brittle stem; on wood or moss	Galerina
10. Powdery cap	<i>Rozites</i>

10. Small to medium fruiting body, growing on wood debris, gills subdecurrent	<i>Tubaria</i>
10. Medium size fruiting body; dry, convex to flat cap; in grass, wood chips, or in woods	<i>Agrocybe</i>
11. Conical cap	12
11. Convex, smooth cap	13
11. Very short, lateral stalk; small, pleurotoid fruiting body (look like small Oysters)	<i>Crepidotus</i>
12. Umbonate, fibrous, conical cap; characteristic <i>Inocybe</i> odor; growing on ground	<i>Inocybe</i>
12. Not umbonate, smooth cap	<i>Conocybe</i>
12. Frailer, fragile looking, sticky cap	<i>Bolbitius</i>
13. Viscid cap; dull brown to buff	<i>Hebeloma</i>
13. Dry, plane cap; stem often eccentric	<i>Paxillus</i>
14. Free gills; cap medium sized to large; spore print chocolate brown	<i>Agaricus</i>
14. Decurrent gills	15
14. Attached, smokey gills	16
15. White to grayish immature gills and flesh; glutinous, colorful cap; near conifers	<i>Gomphidius</i>
15. Yellow to reddish immature gills and flesh; glutinous, colorful cap; near conifer	<i>Chroogomphus</i>
16. Growing in clusters on wood; spore print dark brown to purplish brown	<i>Hypholoma</i>
16. Growing on ground or woody debris; fuzzy stem, colorful cap	<i>Stropharia</i>
17. Cap deliquescing with age	<i>Coprinus</i>
17. Cap not deliquescing	18
18. Reasonably robust stem; some bruise blue specially near the stem base	<i>Psilocybe</i>
18. Frail stem	19
19. Mottled gills, stem never truly white	<i>Panaeolus</i>
19. Even colored gills, stem may be white	<i>Psathyrella</i>

Key to light-spored, gilled mushrooms: [Mushroomexpert key for pale-spored](#), and [pink-spored, gilled mushrooms](#)

Does it have ...?	Go to
20. Free gills	21
20. Attached gills	23
20. Notched gills	30
20. Decurrent gills	32
20. Lateral stalk	35
20. Small diameter (<2.5 cm)	40
21. Volva	Amanita
21. No volva	22
22. Viscid (sticky) cap; thin gills	Limacella
22. Dry, white cap	<i>Leucoagaricus</i>
22. Dry, small, scaly cap; growing on litter (saprobic)	Lepiota
22. Dry, large, scaly cap; growing on litter (saprobic)	Macrolepiota
23. Ring present	24
23. Waxy	25
23. Brittle flesh, snaps like chalk	27
23. Tough, rubbery stalk	28
23. Growing on other mushrooms	29
24. Smaller fruiting body; growing on ground; powdery granular cap and stem	Cystoderma
24. Larger fruiting body; growing on living or dead wood (may be under ground)	Armillaria
25. Whole mushroom waxy, clean, and colorful; thick, waxy gills	26
25. Only gills waxy; thick, purple, pinkish or flesh-colored; granular cap; fibrous stalk;	Laccaria
26. Small, thin-fleshed, convex to conical cap; often colorful mushroom	Hygrocybe
26. Medium size to large, convex cap; slimy, whitish or dull-colored	Hygrophorus
27. Exudes milk (latex, juice or sap); growing on ground (mycorrhizal)	Lactarius
27. No milk	Russula
28. Small fruiting body; growing in clusters on decayed mushrooms	Collybia
28. Normal size fruiting body; growing in clusters, usually on leaf duff	Gymnopus
28. Like <i>Gymnopus</i> but with pink spores	Rhodocollybia
28. Fuzzy/velvety stem; fruits late, even under snow	Flammulina
28. Long straight stem	Xerula
29. Small fruiting body; growing in clusters on decayed mushrooms	Collybia

29. Growing on living mushrooms (parasitic) → Key to mushroom-eating fungi	Asterophora
30. Medium-large fruiting body; growing separately on the ground, fleshy stem	Tricholoma
30. Growing together, in lawns; stems fused	Lyophyllum
30. Large, leafy fruiting body; growing on rotten wood	Megacollybia
30. Straight stem; flat, knobbed cap; small to medium sized, brownish to whitish; on ground	Melanoleuca
30. Growing on wood	31
30. Pink spore print	Lepista
31. Gill edges even; cap has small scales; growing on wood	Tricholomopsis
31. Gill edges serrated or toothed; cap has large flakes	Lentinus
32. Funnel shaped cap; distinct <i>Clitocybe</i> smell	Clitocybe
32. Small fruiting body; growing on wood	Clitocybula
32. Growing on wood or woody debris; velvety cap	Hygrophoropsis
32. Fibrous texture	Pseudoclitocybe
32. Pink spore print	Clitopilus
32. Large fruiting body; dry, smooth or finely velvety cap; gills can be peeled-off from cap	Leucopaxillus
32. Very large mushroom; double ring; growing under conifers; stem tapered and rooting	Catathelasma
32. Small fruiting body; growing in moss	Cantharellula
32. Waxy	33 (Next page)
32. Brittle flesh (snaps like chalk); exudes milk; growing on ground (mycorrhizal)	Lactarius
32. Large, leafy fruiting body; growing on rotten wood	Megacollybia
32. Straight stem; flat, knobbed cap; small to medium sized, brownish to whitish; on ground	Melanoleuca ***
32. Fold-like gills	34
33. Small, thin-fleshed, convex to conical cap; often colorful mushroom	Hygrocybe
33. Medium size to large, convex cap; slimy, whitish or dull-colored	Hygrophorus
34. Shaped like normal gilled mushrooms	Cantharellus
34. Thin black trumpets	Craterellus
34. Thick and fleshy fruiting body	Gomphus
34. Clumped black mushrooms	Polyozellus
35. True lateral stalk	36
35. Like fan, wraps so stalk looks central	39
36. Fleshy and soft fruiting body	37
36. Tough, rubbery to woody fruiting body	38
37. Small, thin, white fruiting body	Pleurocybella

37. Larger, fleshier fruiting body	<i>Pleurotus</i>
38. Gills blend into stem	<i>Lentinellus</i>
38. Very distinct gill-stem margin	<i>Panellus</i>
39. Growing on the ground	<i>Hohenbuehelia</i>
39. Growing on wood	<i>Hypsizygous</i>
40. Revive with water; leathery stem	<u>Marasmius</u>
40. Conical striate cap	41
40. Long stalk; nipples cap; decurrent gills	<i>Cantharellelula</i>
40. Umbilicate to funnel shaped cap; decurrent gills	42
40. Waxy	<i>Hygrocybe</i>
40. Free gills	<i>Lepiota</i>
40. Growing on mushrooms	43
41. Normal size for group	<i>Mycena</i>
41. Very small, white fruiting body	<i>Hemimycena</i>
41. Very small, colored fruiting body	<i>Rickenella</i>
42. Distinct <i>Clitocybe</i> smell	<i>Clitocybe</i>
42. Growing on wood in troops	<i>Xeromphalina</i>
43. Growing on dead mushrooms	<i>Collybia</i>
43. Growing on living mushrooms	<i>Asterophora</i>