



# Fungi Introduction

The UK is home to around 15,000 species of fungi, ranging from familiar field mushrooms to rare and unusual varieties. These species are organized into 16 families, each containing several genera that share common traits. Although fungal classification can be complex and scientific, beginners can start exploring by learning to recognize key features such as shape, colour, and preferred habitat, which help in identifying different types.

## Structure of a Mushroom (Fruit-Body):

**Cap** or pileus is the top structure that holds the gills or pores, varying in shape, size, colour, and texture.

**Texture** on the cap is very varied for example it can be scaly, patchy, wrinkled, slimy or hairy.

**Underside** of cap may contain gills, pores, ridges, or teeth.

**Ring** or annulus is the leftover part of the partial veil that forms a collar/skirt around the mushroom stipe.

**Stipe** refers to the stem or the mushroom.

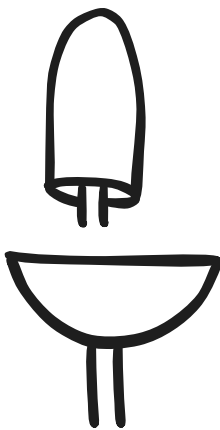
**Volva** is a cup-like structure at the base of a mushroom, left from the universal veil.

**Mycelium** is the underground network of fungal threads (hyphae) that supports mushroom growth.



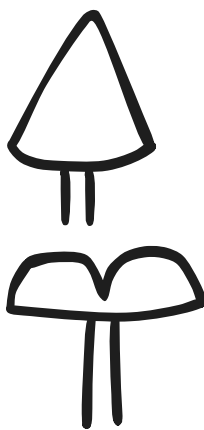
## Cap Shapes:

Cylindrical



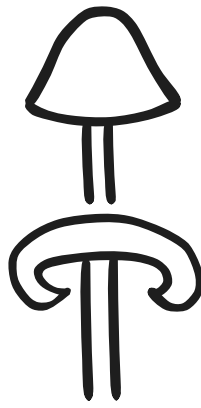
Plane or Expanded

Conical



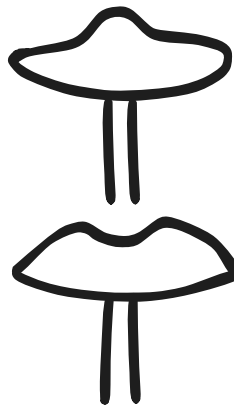
Umbilicate

Bell Shaped or Campanulate



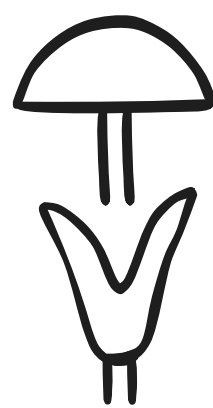
Involute (in section)

Umbonate



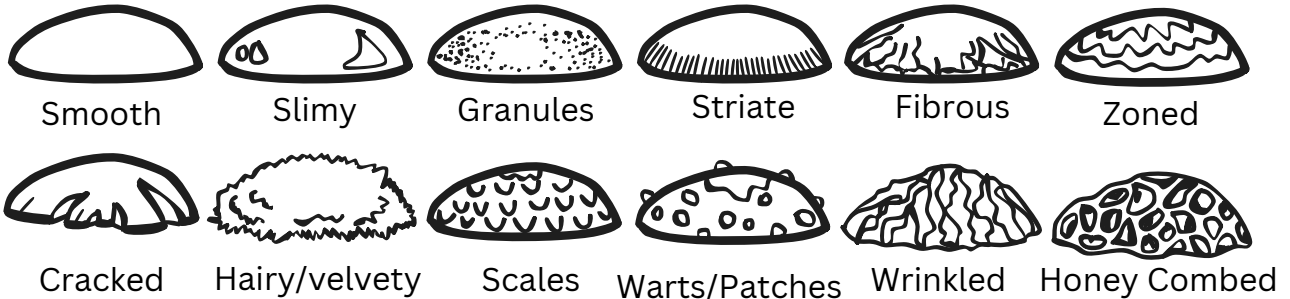
Centrally Depressed

Regular and Convex

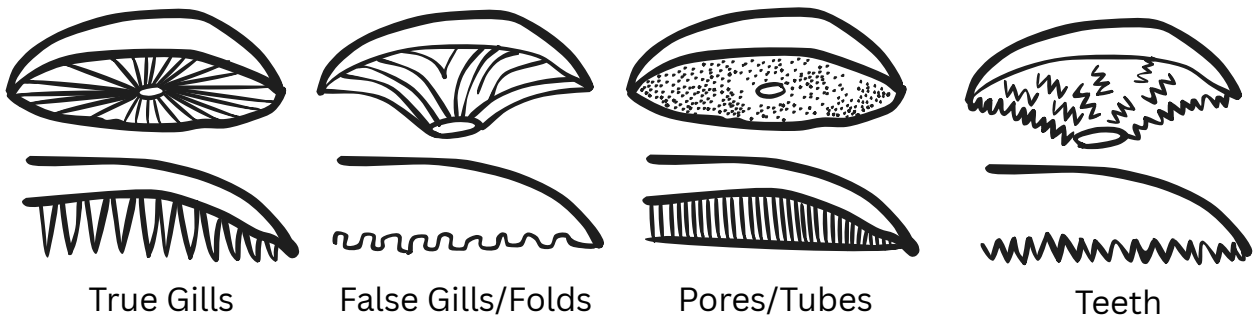


Infundibuliform or Funnel-Shaped (in section)

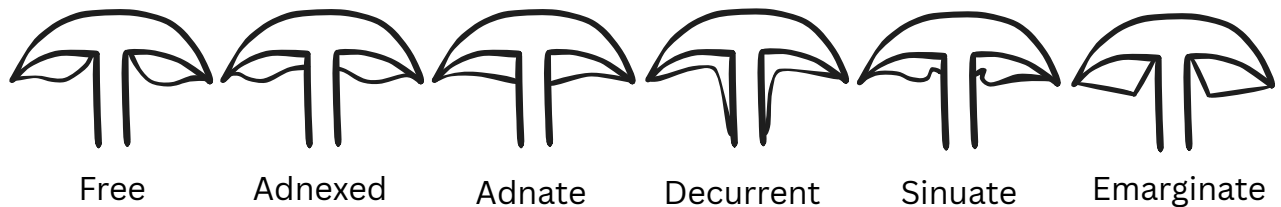
**Cap Textures:**



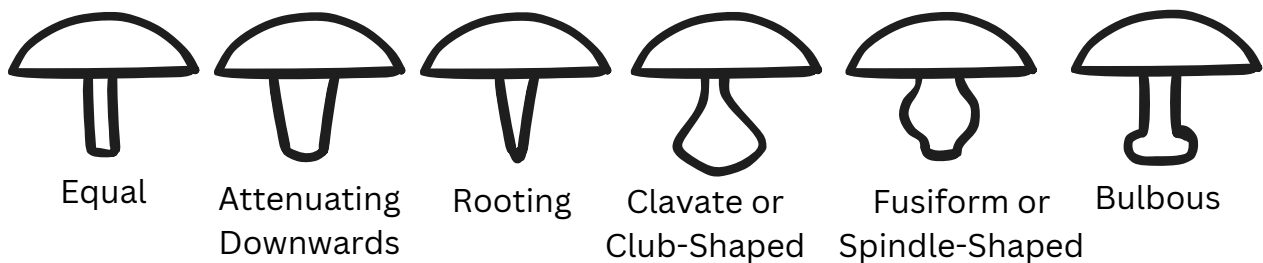
**Cap Underside:**



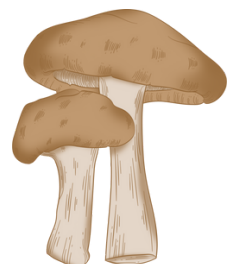
**Underside Attachments:**



**Stipe Shapes:**



Now that you've explored mushroom basics, you're ready to start identifying common species. Mushrooms are most abundant in autumn, especially after rain followed by sunshine. Use this guide to help you spot and identify some of Guernsey's common mushrooms. You can also keep an eye out for information on how you can get involved in community fungi events!





## Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*)



- Habitat:** Woodland and heathland mostly near birch, pine or spruce.
- Size:** Up to 20cm across and 30cm tall.
- Cap:** Bright with white warts.
- Underside:** White gills free from the stem.
- Stipe:** White and brittle with bulbous volva and a scaly ring/skirt.
- Other:** Savoury smell.

## Jelly Ear (*Auricularia auricula-judae*)



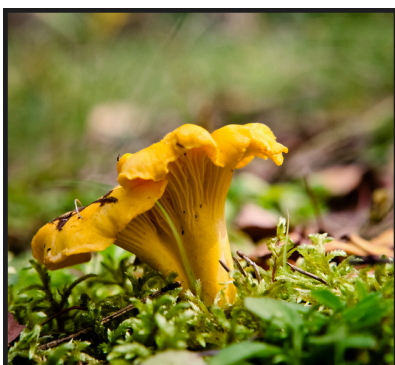
- Habitat:** Dead and dying branches of hardwood such as elder, beech, sycamore and ash.
- Size:** 3-10cm across.
- Cap:** Infundibuliform or Funnel-Shaped with lobes like ears. Tan-brown and velvety.
- Underside:** Wrinkled and shiny.
- Other:** Rubbery, gelatinous flesh.

## King Alfred's Cakes (*Daldinia concentrica*)



- Habitat:** Dead and decaying wood such as beech and ash
- Size:** 2-10cm across.
- Cap:** Round, lumpy and cracks easily. Matt pinkish-brown becoming black and shiny when older like coal.
- Other:** Grey and black zoning on flesh. Black spore print up to 3cm wide around the fungus.

## Chanterelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*)



- Habitat:** Coniferous or broadleaf forests in mossy areas.
- Size:** 3-8cm tall and 2-3cm across.
- Cap:** Yellow/Orange, Funnel-shaped, wavy and smooth.
- Underside:** False gills with decurrent attachment.
- Stipe:** Smooth and the same colour as the cap.
- Other:** Not to confuse with False Chanterelle or Jack-o'-lanterns, both of which are poisonous



## Fairy Inkcap (*Coprinellus disseminatus*)



- Habitat:** Stumps and dying deciduous trees.
- Size:** 0.5-1.5cm across, 1.5-3cm tall.
- Cap:** White/Cream turning grey as it ages. Bell-Shaped or Campanulate with striate/pleated texture.
- Underside:** Gills adnate, medium to closely spaced and white to grey-black coloured.
- Stipe:** Thin, hollow, white and very fragile.

## Glistening Inkcap (*Coprinellus micaceus*)



- Habitat:** Around broad leaved stumps or on buried wood.
- Size:** 2-3 cm across and 4-6 cm tall.
- Cap:** Orange/brown and darker towards centre. Bell-shaped becoming umbonate and cracked.
- Underside:** Gills white then brown then black. Crowded and free of the stipe.
- Stipe:** Thin, white, and discoloured at base.
- Other:** Powdery 'mica' on cap looks shiny in sun.

## Shaggy Inkcap (*Coprinus comatus*)



- Habitat:** Meadows, lawns, and wood edges. Rich organic matter such as decaying plant material.
- Size:** 5-15cm tall and 2-5cm wide.
- Cap:** White/cream with zoned scales. Cylindrical then bell-shaped.
- Underside:** Initially white, dissolving to black inky substance.
- Stipe:** Equal, smooth and white.

## St George's Mushroom (*Calocybe gambosa*)



- Habitat:** Meadows, lawns, and wood edges in short grass.
- Size:** 6-10cm across and 5-8cm tall.
- Cap:** White/cream and convex shape.
- Underside:** Gills white/pale cream. Emarginate.
- Stipe:** White/cream usually stout and thicker towards the base, no skirt.
- Other:** Found spring/summer and has a mealy smell.



## White Saddle (*Helvella crispa*)



- Habitat:** In leaf litter usually with Beech or Oak.
- Size:** 6-12cm tall, 3-6cm across.
- Cap:** Highly convoluted sheet in rough saddle shape. (scrunched).
- Underside:** Tiny pores (invisible to naked eye) all over cap.
- Stipe:** Hollow tube with winkles and cavities up and down stipe.

## Frosty Bonnet (*Mycena tenerrima*)



- Habitat:** Fallen twigs and other woody debris usually in well wooded areas.
- Size:** Tiny! 2-7mm across 1-6cm tall.
- Cap:** Conical/convex, white transparent cap.
- Underside:** Gills free from stipe.
- Stipe:** Thin with bulbous disk-like base.

## Oyster Mushroom (*Pleurotus ostreatus*)



- Habitat:** Hardwood trees such as beech.
- Size:** 5-25cm across.
- Cap:** White/cream or grey, fan or oyster-shaped and broad. May be lobed or wavy.
- Underside:** White/cream/grey gills with decurrent attachment.
- Stipe:** Short and thick and mostly off-centre.
- Other:** Edible fungus cultivated on a commercial basis.

## Upright Coral (*Ramaria stricta*)



- Habitat:** Buried wood under Beech trees and in coniferous forests.
- Size:** 4 to 10cm tall and up to 8cm across.
- Fruit:** White or pale cream turning darker with age. Coral-like structure with a short base often rooted in buried wood. Slender, upright branches repeatedly fork and end in sharp tips. Surface smooth and often flattened.