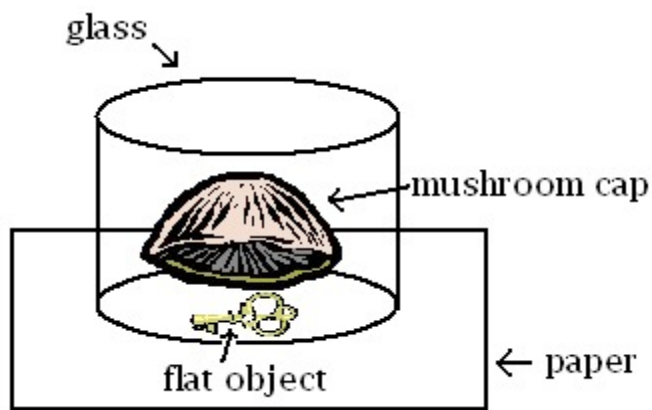


# Photographing with Mushrooms

Here's a fun experiment that combines science and art.

For this experiment you will need:

- a fresh mushroom, the cap should be bigger than a quarter
- a flat object, smaller than the mushroom, but larger than a dime
- a sheet of white paper
- a glass or a glass bowl, larger than the mushroom
- spray adhesive (optional)



Cut off the stem of the mushroom so that the cap can lay flat. Set the paper on a flat surface where it won't be disturbed. Set the flat object (such as a leaf, a key or a charm) on the paper. Cover the object with the mushroom, gills side down. Cover the mushroom with the glass, mouth side down. Let set for 24 hours. Carefully remove the glass, the mushroom and the object and you should have a picture like the one above.

The reason this happens is because the mushroom produces spores. The spores are feather light microscopic "seeds" that help the mushroom reproduce. Different mushrooms produce different colors of spores. Most fresh mushrooms found in stores are *Agaricus bisporus*, which have chocolate brown spores.

If you have no print perhaps you have a white spore mushroom? Try using a black piece of paper.

You will also notice that your print can smudge easily. To preserve your print take a photograph of it, scan it into your computer or cover it with a spray adhesive. If you do the latter, spray above the print so that the adhesive settles on the print like a falling mist.



**Experiment with different objects and different kinds of mushrooms.**