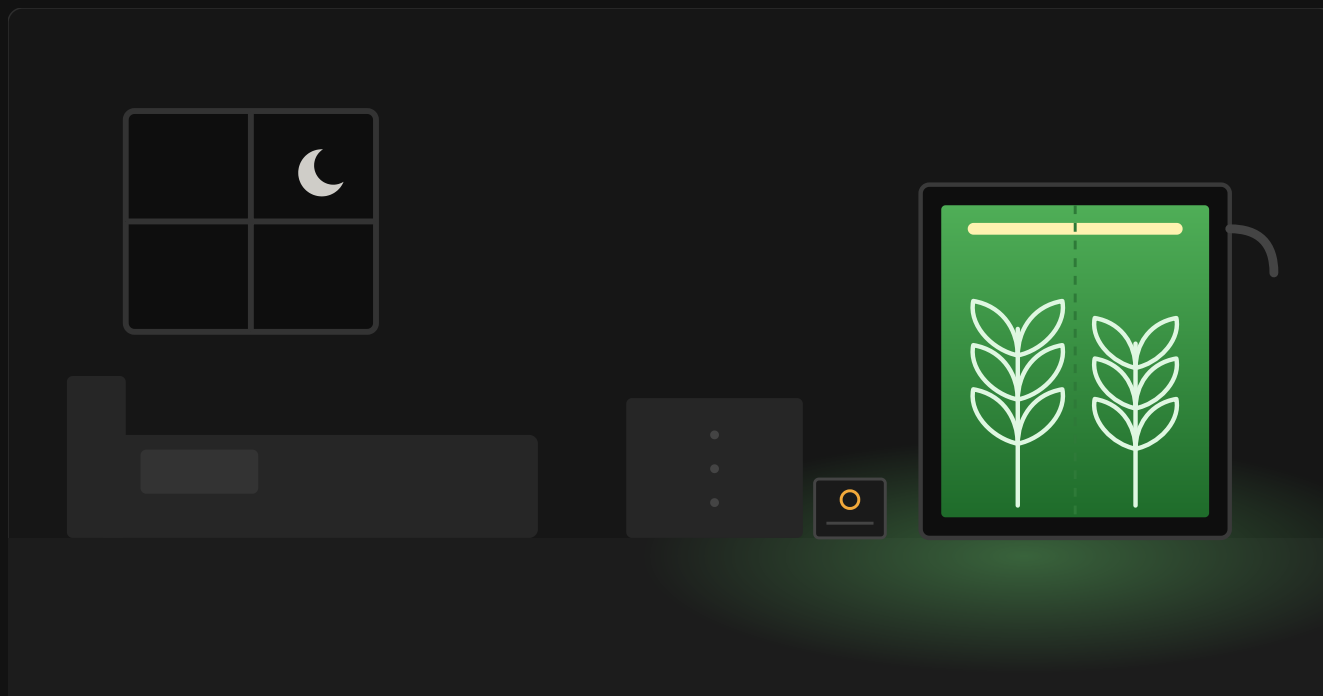


LET'S GROW INSIDE

Room to Grow

The Home Grower's Handbook

The case for growing inside: cannabis, herbs, food, and mushrooms in the space you already have.



IN THIS GUIDE

A road map

from curiosity to your first harvest.

- | | | |
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START ANYWHERE. GROW AT YOUR OWN PACE.

A NOTE FROM THE GROWER

WELCOME.

You are holding this because you signed up to learn something, and I want to tell you what you are about to read before you read it.

This is not a history book, although it starts with one. And it is not a sales pitch for a course, although there is one at the end. It is the case for an idea I have built my life around: that the best cannabis, the freshest food, and the most interesting mushrooms you will ever have are grown at home, by one person, in a small room they control completely.

I did not grow up with this. In 2015 I was out of work in Toledo, Ohio, doing the math on a temp job that would have left me two hundred dollars a paycheck. A childhood friend took me down to his basement in Detroit and showed me the first cannabis plant I had ever seen. I turned the job down that Saturday. A year later I was growing in a basement of my own, behind a false wall I built by hand. Ten years later I have built grow rooms in houses all over this country, lost all of it to a car accident, and found out that what I had been doing the whole time was teaching.

So this book is what I would tell you if you were sitting on my couch asking whether you could do this. Where the plant came from and why it went indoors. What the room gives you. What it actually takes, in pieces and in minutes. Four real rooms, because everyone thinks their space is the one that will not work. The nine reasons people give me for why they can't, and my answers. And what else the room will grow once you have it, because the tent does not know what it is growing.

Read it in any order. Argue with it. Then go measure a closet.



LET'S GROW INSIDE

A word on the law. Home cultivation of cannabis is legal in some U.S. states, limited in others, and prohibited in the rest. The rules change every year. Nothing in this book is a license; check your state before you plant a seed. Herbs, vegetables, and gourmet mushrooms are legal to grow everywhere, and most of this book applies to them just the same. This is educational material for adults 21 and over.

1

PART ONE

Where It Came From

Ten thousand years of a plant, and the fifty that changed it most.

8000 BCE

Hemp cord in pottery, East Asia

500 BCE

Scythian tents, Pamir burials

1619

Virginia orders hemp grown

1937

Marihuana Tax Act

1970

Schedule I

1996

California medical

2012

CO & WA adult use

2018

Canada; U.S. hemp legal

1 A short history of a very old plant

People have been living with cannabis for longer than they have been writing things down. Hemp cord pressed into pottery in East Asia dates back roughly ten thousand years. Chinese texts list it as a medicine. Scythian nomads, according to the Greek historian Herodotus, threw the seeds on hot stones inside felt tents and sat in the smoke. Burnt cannabis residue in a 2,500-year-old cemetery in the Pamir Mountains tells the same story without the historian. In India it was sacred; in the Islamic world it was medicine and a pastime; in Africa it traveled with trade routes long before any European saw it.

For most of that history, the plant was two things at once: a fiber and a medicine. The fiber built the modern world. Sails, rope, paper, and clothing came from hemp, and when the first English colonists arrived in Virginia, the colony's assembly ordered them to grow it. George Washington grew it. For three hundred years in America, cannabis was a farm crop like wheat, and tinctures made from it sat on pharmacy shelves.

Then, in a single generation, it became a crime. The Marihuana Tax Act of 1937 taxed it out of legal existence. The Controlled Substances Act of 1970 placed it in Schedule I, alongside heroin, as a drug with no accepted medical use. For the next fifty years the United States spent billions of dollars and millions of arrests trying to make the plant go away. It did not go away. It went home.

The turn back began in California in 1996, when voters legalized medical use. Colorado and Washington legalized adult use in 2012. Uruguay became the first country to legalize it outright in 2013, Canada in 2018, and the 2018 U.S. Farm Bill made hemp a legal crop again. Today more Americans live in a state where cannabis is legal than in one where it is not. The plant that was a farm crop, then a felony, is a farm crop again. But the most important thing that happened to it in the twentieth century did not happen on a farm.

10,000 yrs

of human use

1619Virginia orders hemp
grown**1937**

the year it became a crime

1996

the year the turn began

2 The plant went home

Here is the part of the history that nobody tells, and it is the part that matters.

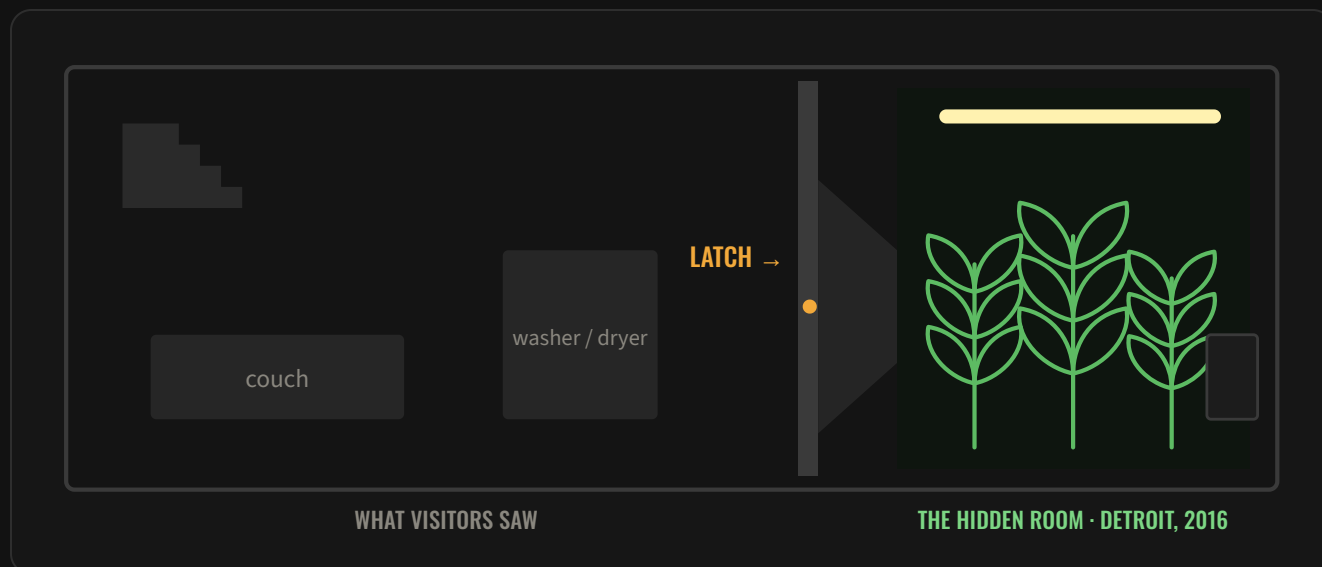
When growing cannabis became a crime, the people who kept growing it had to hide. They moved it indoors: into closets, basements, attics, spare rooms. And when you move a plant indoors, you have to become its sun, its rain, its wind, and its seasons. Every variable that a farmer leaves to the sky, the indoor grower has to understand and control. That constraint turned out to be the greatest thing that ever happened to the plant.

In the 1970s and 80s, hobbyists in California, the Pacific Northwest, and the Netherlands worked out, by trial and error, nearly everything modern cultivation knows. They adapted high-pressure sodium lamps from greenhouses. They figured out hydroponics in buckets. They learned that removing male plants produced seedless, far more potent flower. They bred the strains whose names are still on dispensary menus. They did it in rooms the size of the one you are sitting in, with a trade magazine and a grow store that could be raided at any time. In 1989, federal agents raided grow shops across the country in a single day specifically to stop home growers, and it did not stop them either.

Every advance since has followed the same path. Carbon filters, the sealed tent, the LED grow light, automated watering: all of it was proven in home grows first. The plant that was pushed into the basement came out of it better than it had ever been.

Then legalization arrived and handed the plant to corporations, and anyone who has been around cannabis for a while will tell you what happened next. Warehouse grows under cost pressure, harvested early, dried fast, sprayed with whatever keeps the yield up. Legal does not mean good. Ask a longtime consumer where the best flower they ever had came from, and the answer is almost never a store.

The plant that was pushed into the basement came out of it better than it had ever been.



That is what I learned in a basement in Detroit in 2015. A childhood friend walked me downstairs and showed me the first cannabis plant I had ever seen in my life. A year later I was growing in a basement of my own, behind a false wall I built by hand, and my first solo harvest was three pounds of LA Confidential from eight plants that people told me was the best they had ever smoked. Not because I had a farm. Because I had a room, and I controlled everything in it.



The grower behind Let's Grow Inside

Growing indoors since 2015. Learned in a Detroit basement, built a first grow room behind a hidden door in a \$6,000 house, and spent years building grow rooms for other people around the country. After a car accident in 2020 ended the road years, the work became filming and teaching instead.

3 lb

first solo harvest, 8 plants

\$6,000

the house it happened in

1

hidden door

3

grow houses by 2020

NEXT Part Two makes the case: five reasons the best cannabis is grown at home, and what the room gives three very different kinds of grower.

PART TWO

Why Grow Inside

Five reasons, three kinds of grower, and one thing the grow store never mentions.



1



You know what's in it

2



A fraction of the
store

3



Nobody can cut you
off

4



It's private

5



The craft is the point

3 Five reasons the best cannabis is grown at home

You know exactly what is in it

A plant you grew has been fed what you chose to feed it and sprayed with nothing you did not approve. No pesticide residue. No plant growth regulators. No mystery. When you hand a jar to a friend, you can tell them every single thing that touched it, because you were there for all of it. No dispensary can promise that; no lab test tells the whole story.

It costs a fraction of the store

The arithmetic is not close. A 2x4 tent, run by a first-timer who follows the five stages, commonly produces several ounces in a single run. A 4x4 in experienced hands produces a pound or more. At dispensary prices, which run anywhere from one hundred fifty to three hundred dollars an ounce and up depending on the state and the quality, a single run from a small tent can equal what many people spend in a year. The electricity to grow it is the price of a few lattes a week; we do that math in Part Five.

Nobody can cut you off

Supply is in your hands. Dispensaries change menus, strains disappear, prices rise, and in most of the country there is no dispensary at all. A grower with a tent and a jar of seeds is never at the mercy of anyone's inventory.

It is private

Inside a sealed tent with a carbon filter, a plant makes no sound and no smell that reaches the hallway. Nobody has to know: not the neighbors, not your landlord, not your mother-in-law. Discretion was the whole reason the plant went indoors in the first place, and fifty years of home growers have made it very, very good at being invisible.

The craft is the point

This is the reason people do not expect. Growing is absorbing. You learn to read a leaf. You learn what the plant is asking for by the way it holds itself in the morning. You develop opinions about nutrients. You start a journal. The first time you pull a dense, frosted cola out of a room you built and cure it in a jar you have been burping for two weeks, you will understand why the people who do this rarely stop. It is the most satisfying thing I have ever done with my hands, and I have built houses.

4 Three kinds of grower

People come to growing from three directions, and the room gives each of them something different.



The recreational consumer

You like cannabis, you buy it regularly, and you have done the math on what that costs over a year. For you the benefit is simple: top-shelf quality at a fraction of the price, grown in the privacy of your own home, on your own schedule, from strains you chose. The dispensary's best jar is the floor of what a small tent produces, and the tent costs less than a few months of visits.



The medicinal consumer

You use cannabis because it helps you, which means what is in it matters more to you than to anyone. And what is in it has become a real question. Pesticides, plant growth regulators, mold, heavy metals from bad soil, and, in the unregulated market, cannabis cut or sprayed with other drugs altogether. Lab tests catch some of it, in some states, some of the time. The only way to know exactly what you are putting into your body is to have grown it yourself: your seed, your soil, your water, your hands. No sprays you did not choose. Nothing you cannot name. For a medicinal user that is not a luxury; it is the whole point.

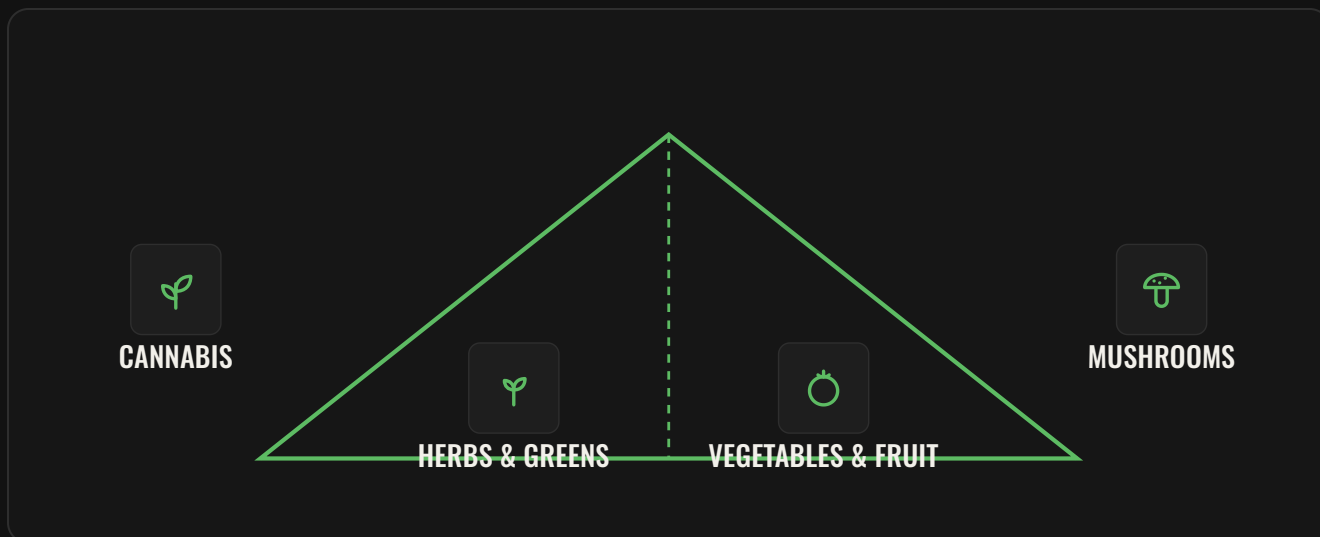


The entrepreneur

You are the person other people trust for cannabis, and you have been putting your name on a product you did not make. Every jar came from somebody else, who got it from somebody else, and nobody in that chain can tell you what was sprayed on it or where it was grown. Growing your own ends that. You control the product from seed to cure, you know it is clean because you kept it clean, and the people you share it with know it came from a reliable source: you. No more anonymous phone calls. No more taking a bag from someone who knows nothing about what is in it. Your reputation rides on your own work, which is where it belongs.

5 Not just cannabis

Here is what nobody mentions at the grow store: **the tent does not know what it is growing.**



A light, a fan, a filter, a pot, and a timer are a controlled environment, and a controlled environment grows anything. The same 2x4 tent that produces a few ounces of flower will produce a year of basil, a continuous supply of salad greens, cherry tomatoes in January, and strawberries on a shelf. Add a tub and a humidifier and it grows oyster mushrooms and lion's mane. The skills are identical: light, air, water, nutrients, timing. If you learn to grow one difficult plant well, you can grow nearly anything.

That matters for two kinds of readers. If you live where cannabis cultivation is still prohibited, everything in this book still applies to you today, with plants that are legal everywhere. And if you grow cannabis, the room you build pays for itself twice: once in the jar and once at the dinner table. Part Six is about everything else the room will do.

If you learn to grow one difficult plant well, you can grow nearly anything.

PART THREE

What It Actually Takes

Seven pieces, five stages, and fifteen minutes a day.

3



The tent



The light



The air



Pot & medium



Water & food



The timer



The meters

6 The seven pieces

Strip away the forum arguments and the thousand-dollar add-ons, and an indoor grow is seven things. Everything else is a refinement.



The tent. A reflective fabric box with a zipper door and ports for ducting. It keeps light in, keeps pests out, and makes everything else work. Sizes run from 2x2 feet (a closet) to 4x8 (a basement wall). It assembles like a camping tent in twenty minutes.



The light. A modern LED grow light replaces the sun. It runs cool, uses a fraction of the power of the old sodium lamps, and lasts for years. The light is the single biggest decision in the setup, and it is the one place not to go cheap.



The air. An inline fan pulls air out of the tent through a carbon filter and pushes it out a window or into the room. A small oscillating fan inside keeps the leaves moving. Together they control temperature, humidity, and smell. In most rooms, a portable air conditioner works alongside them to hold the temperature steady through summer. This is the piece people skip and regret.



The pot and the medium. A fabric pot full of good soil, or a hydroponic system. Soil is forgiving and is where most people should start; it is what the course teaches.



Water and food. A watering can, a bucket, a set of nutrients, and a pH pen so you know what you are pouring. Or an automated system that waters from a reservoir, which we come back to.



The timer. A plug-in timer runs the light on a schedule: eighteen hours a day while the plant grows, twelve when it flowers. The timer is how a plant knows what season it is.



The meters. A thermometer and hygrometer to tell you what the room is doing, and a pH pen for the water. Twenty dollars of instruments remove ninety percent of the guessing.

That is the whole list. A shelf setup for herbs and greens is three of those seven: a light, a tray, and a timer.

7 The five stages

A cannabis plant goes from seed to jar in roughly four to five months, and the course is built around its five stages because each one asks something different of you.



1 Equipment and setup **A WEEKEND**

Build the tent, hang the light, wire the fan, test the timer. Done once.

2 Seedling **WEEKS 1–2**

Germinate, plant, and keep a fragile sprout warm, humid, and gently lit. The most delicate two weeks and the least work.

3 Vegetative **WEEKS 3–8**

The plant builds its frame under eighteen hours of light. You water, feed, and train it to fill the space.

4 Flowering **WEEKS 9–17**

Flip the timer to twelve hours and the plant flowers. Smell arrives; so does the carbon filter. This is where the room earns its keep.

5 Harvest, dry, and cure **WEEKS 18–20**

Cut, hang, dry slowly, and cure in jars. Most first grows are ruined in this stage by impatience, which is why it gets its own book.

Faster crops. Herbs and greens run the same arc in a quarter of the time. Microgreens are ten days from seed to plate. Lettuce is five weeks. Mushrooms from a kit fruit in two.

8 A day in the life

The honest answer to “how much time does it take” is: **about fifteen minutes a day, and some days none.**

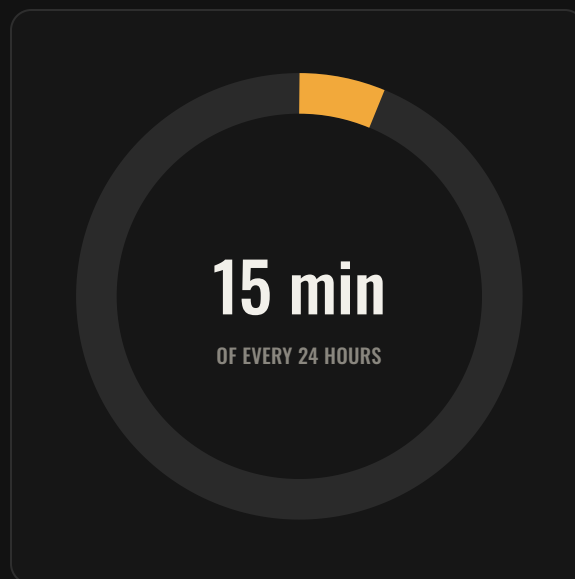
Morning. Unzip the tent, look at the plants, check the temperature and humidity on the gauge, zip it back up. Two minutes.

Every two or three days. Water, or top up the reservoir if the watering is automated. Ten minutes.

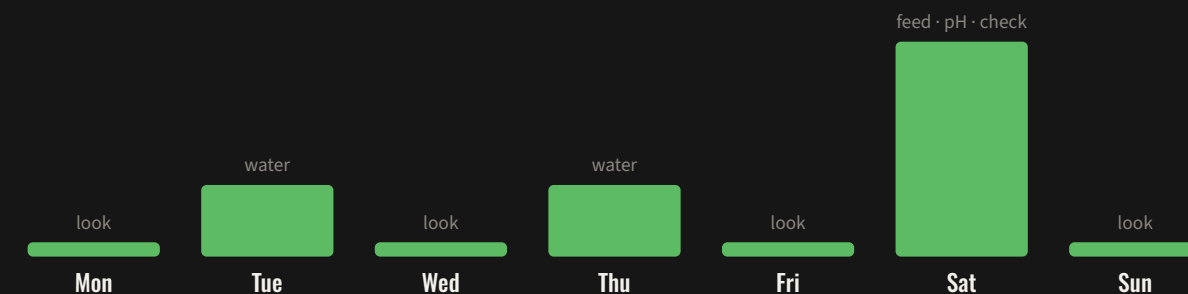
Once a week. Mix nutrients, check pH, look under the leaves for anything moving, tidy the training. Half an hour, with a podcast on.

That is the entire commitment, and the plant does not care whether you do it at 7 a.m. or 11 p.m.

The two things that cannot be rushed are the dry and the cure, and those take patience rather than time: the work is leaving the jars alone.



A TYPICAL WEEK



Minutes per day. The tall bar is the weekly half hour.

NEXT Part Four puts the seven pieces in four real rooms: a closet, a spare bedroom, a basement, and a garage.

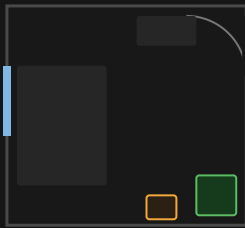
PART FOUR

Room to Grow

Four real rooms, drawn to scale.



Composites of real people I have built for and taught. The details change; the lesson is the same every time: the space you already have is enough. And in every one of them, a portable air conditioner is part of the setup.



01 THE CLOSET

One-bedroom apartment

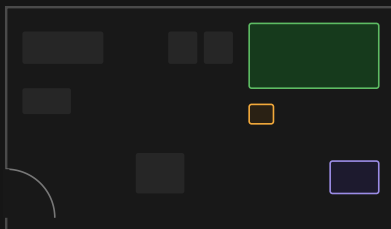
2 × 2 ft tent



02 SPARE BEDROOM

Suburban house

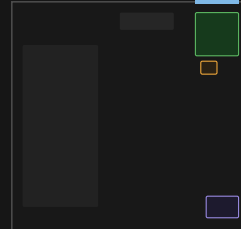
4 × 4 ft tent



03 THE BASEMENT

The room I started in

4 × 8 ft tent

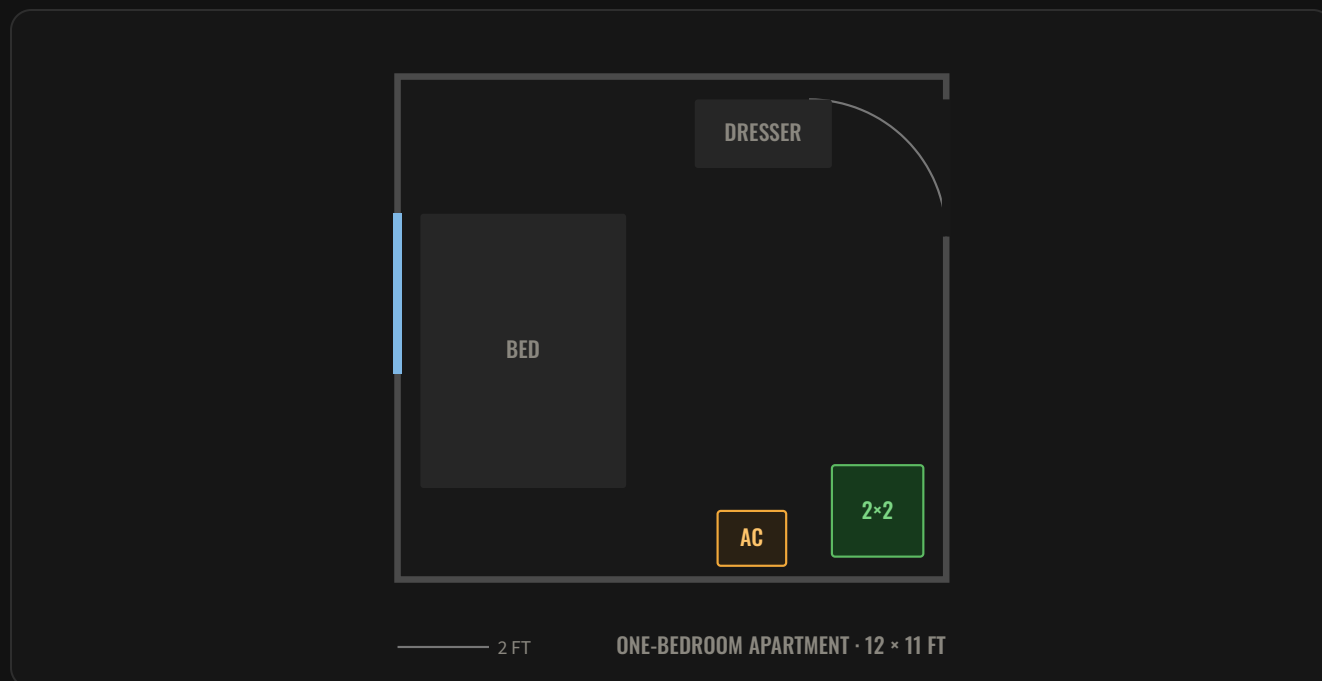


04 THE GARAGE

The underestimated room

4 × 4 ft tent

9 The closet — a one-bedroom apartment



TENT

2 × 2 ft



PLANTS

1



LIGHT

100 W LED



POWER

~\$10 / mo



TIME

1 hr / wk

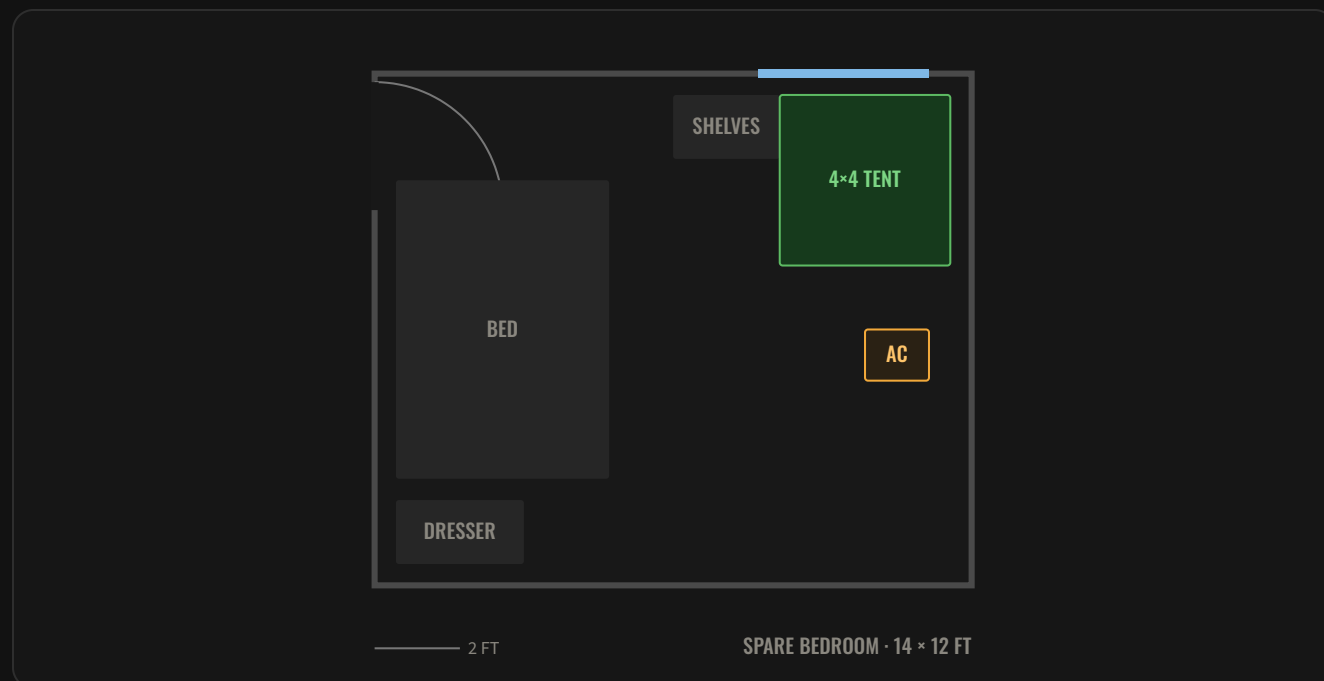
The worry. Renter, third floor, a reach-in bedroom closet that was holding winter coats. Thin walls, a nosy neighbor, a lease that says nothing about plants but everything about “odors.”

What fit. A 2x2 tent on the closet floor, a 100-watt LED, a four-inch inline fan with a small carbon filter venting into the closet itself, and one plant in a three-gallon fabric pot. A small portable air conditioner in the bedroom keeps the closet in range through the summer; the tent runs on a single outlet. With the closet door closed, the hallway smells like a hallway. One plant, grown well, produced about three ounces. The light draws less power than a gaming PC.

What else it grows. Between cannabis runs, a tray of basil and a tray of lettuce under the same light on a shorter timer. The closet now produces something every month of the year.

The lesson. The smallest tent is still a controlled environment. One well-grown plant beats four crowded ones.

10 The spare bedroom — a suburban house



TENT

4 × 4 ft



PLANTS

4



LIGHT

300 W LED



POWER

\$25–35 / mo



TIME

1.5 hr / wk

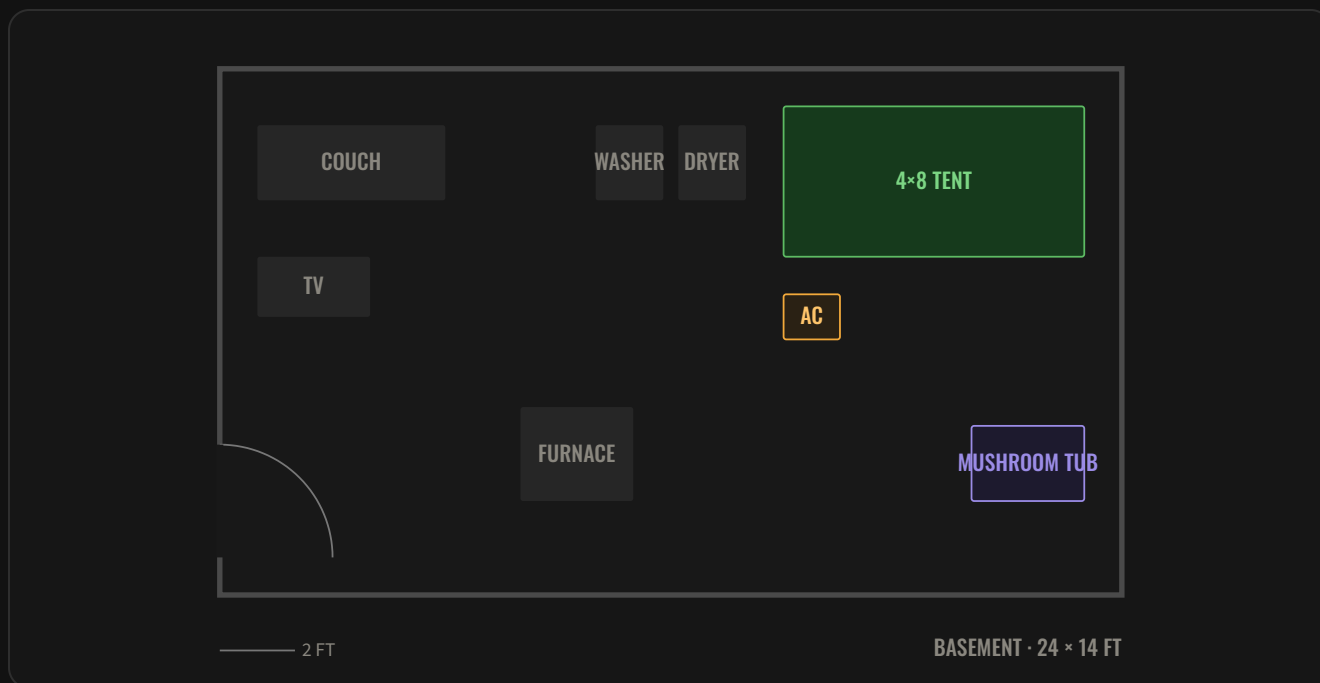
The worry. A couple with a guest room that hosted guests twice a year. The carpet, the window, and what to say to the in-laws at Thanksgiving.

What fit. A 4x4 tent in the corner by the window, a 300-watt LED, a six-inch fan with a carbon filter ducted to the window through a foam insert that looks like an air-conditioner panel. A portable air conditioner on the other side of the room holds the temperature where the plants want it and dries the air during the cure. Four plants in five-gallon pots on a tray that catches every drop; the carpet never got wet. The room still has its bed, and the in-laws still use it. The tent in the corner has been explained as “tomatoes,” which, for part of the year, is true.

What else it grows. A two-shelf rack beside the tent with its own strip lights holds microgreens and herbs year-round. In the off-season the tent itself grows dwarf tomatoes and peppers.

The lesson. A tent is furniture. It is a cabinet that happens to be a farm, and it shares a room with a bed.

11 The basement — the room I started in



TENT

4 × 8 ft



PLANTS

8–10



LIGHT

2 × 300 W



POWER

\$40–60 / mo



TIME

2 hr / wk

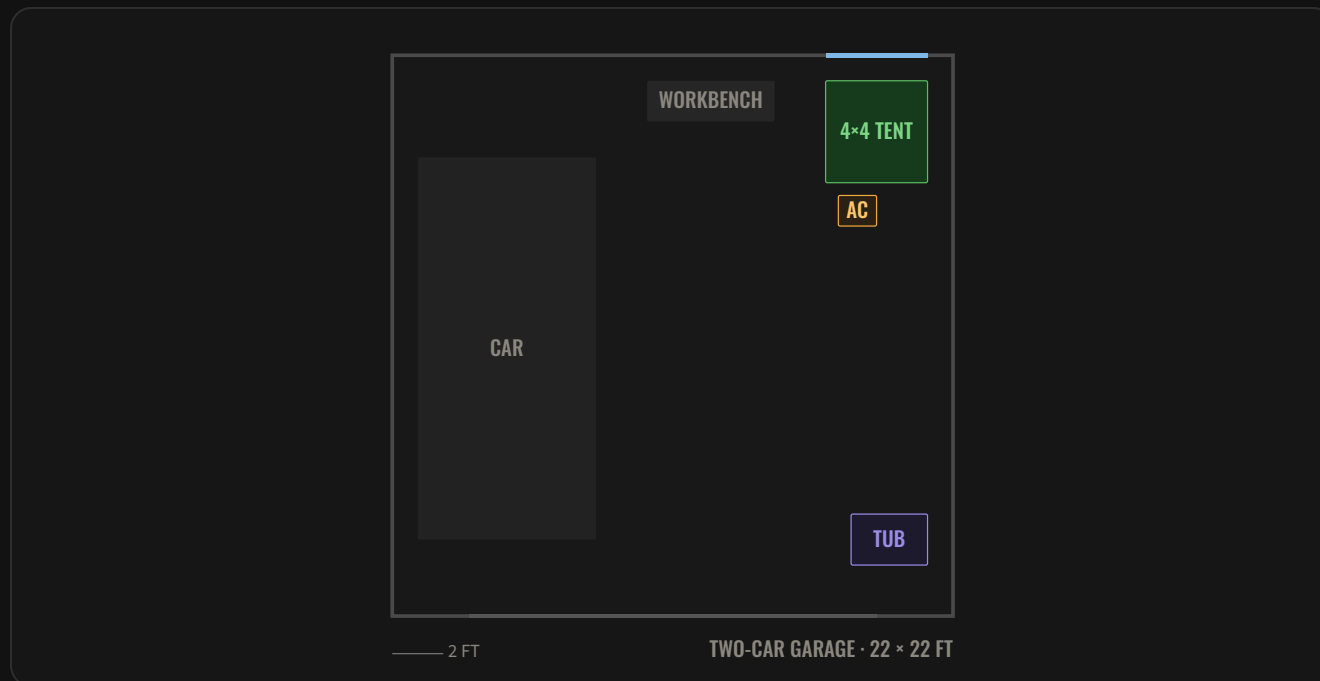
The worry. A finished or unfinished basement is the ideal grow room, and it is where most of my own grows have been. Cool, dark, private, and usually with a drain nearby. The worries are humidity, cold floors in winter, and the one that nobody admits: the basement is where the whole family goes.

What fit. A 4x8 tent along one wall, the same size we film the course in. Two 300-watt LEDs, a six-inch fan and filter venting into the basement, which is big enough to dilute anything, a portable air conditioner with a dehumidify mode for the summer and the cure, and a heat mat under the pots in winter. Eight to ten plants on an automated watering system that only needs the reservoir filled once a week. The tent sits beside the washer and dryer. The rest of the basement is a rec room.

What else it grows. Basements are where mushrooms want to live. A separate tub in a cool corner, kept humid, fruits oyster mushrooms and lion's mane with nearly no effort. The cannabis tent and the mushroom tub share a room happily; they want different conditions and the tent walls keep them apart.

The lesson. If you have a basement, you have a grow room, and probably a mushroom farm. Build the tent and keep the space around it as ordinary as it was.

12 The garage — the one people underestimate



TENT

4 × 4 ft



PLANTS

4



CLIMATE

Portable AC



POWER

\$30–45 / mo



TIME

1.5 hr / wk

The worry. A two-car garage with one car in it. People assume a garage will not work because it is the one space in the house with no climate control: cold in January, hot in July, and a door that opens to the street. It is actually one of the best rooms in the house to grow in, once you give it the one thing it is missing.

What fit. A 4x4 tent against the house wall, which is the warmest wall, and a portable air conditioner beside it with its exhaust hose run out a window panel. That one unit is what makes the garage work. In summer it holds the tent in the mid-seventies while the asphalt outside is a hundred; in winter the LED's own warmth carries the tent through most of the cold, and a small space heater on a thermostat covers the rest. The inline fan and carbon filter handle the smell; the car handles the rest of the cover story. Four plants, year-round, with nobody who walks past the garage any the wiser.

What else it grows. The far corner of the garage, away from the tent, is cold in winter, and that is exactly what oyster mushrooms want. A mushroom tub on a shelf from November to March produces flush after flush while the cannabis flowers twenty feet away.

The lesson. A garage is a grow room with a climate problem, and a portable air conditioner is the whole solution. It is the room with the most space, the most privacy, and the easiest venting in the house.

The space you already have is enough.

PART FIVE

The Objections, Answered

Every person I have ever taught had a reason it would not work for them. These are the nine I hear most, with the honest answers.

5



“My whole house will smell like it.”

It will not, and this is the objection technology has most completely solved. A flowering cannabis plant is strongly aromatic for about eight weeks. The fix is physics: an inline fan pulls air out of the tent through a canister of activated carbon, which absorbs the terpenes before the air leaves. Because the fan is pulling air out, the tent sits under slight negative pressure; its walls bow inward, and the only way air leaves the tent is through the filter. Unzip the door and you will smell the garden. Zip it, and the room smells like the room. The carbon filter lasts a year or more. Every scenario in Part Four runs one, and the course shows exactly how to size and hang it.



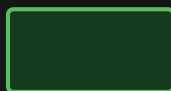
“I don't have the space.”

A 2x2 tent is the footprint of a bar stool. A 2x4 is a dresser. A 4x4 is a loveseat. Everything you need stands inside the tent, and the tent stands in a closet, a corner, or against a wall. Growers in studio apartments run 2x4 tents. If you have room for a bicycle, you have room for a grow.



2 × 2 FT

a bar stool



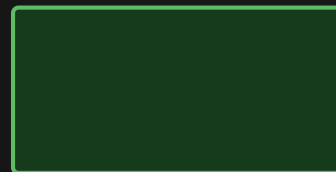
2 × 4 FT

a dresser



4 × 4 FT

a loveseat



4 × 8 FT

a sofa

“I don't have the time.”

Fifteen minutes a day; see Chapter 8. And the time can be engineered down further. A gravity-fed watering system feeds the plants from a reservoir, so the plants feed themselves for a week at a stretch. A fan controller watches temperature and humidity and adjusts speed on its own. A timer runs the light. The plants do not need you on a Tuesday night, and a weekend away is fine. The one thing you cannot automate is looking at the plants, which takes two minutes and is the best part.

-  Reservoir feeds for a week
-  Controller runs the fan
-  Timer runs the light
-  AC holds the temperature

“The electric bill will give me away.”

Modern LEDs changed this. The old sodium lamps that lit the basements of the 1990s drew a thousand watts and heated the room; a 2x4 LED draws two hundred. At average U.S. electricity rates, a 2x4 tent running eighteen hours a day costs roughly fifteen to twenty dollars a month; a 4x4 with a 300-watt light, twenty-five to thirty-five; a 4x8 with two lights, forty to sixty in veg and less in flower, when the light runs twelve hours. Add a portable air conditioner in summer and you are still under what a window unit in a bedroom costs. Nobody is looking at a thirty-dollar line item.

2 × 4 · 200 W



\$15–20

4 × 4 · 300 W



\$25–35

4 × 8 · 600 W



\$40–60

PER MONTH, LIGHT ON 18 H/DAY, ~16¢ PER KWH

“It’s loud.”

The fan is the only moving part that makes noise, and a modern inline fan with a speed controller, run at half speed, is quieter than a refrigerator. Mount it with the included hangers rather than on the tent frame and it is quieter still. Guests in the spare bedroom in Chapter 10 sleep next to one.

“It costs too much to start.”

A complete 2x4 tent with a good light, fan, filter, pots, soil, and nutrients runs in the high hundreds. A 4x4, a little over a thousand. A 4x8 is more, and it is a setup for someone who has already decided. Every tier pays for itself in its first run, and the equipment lasts for years. The course's Stage 1 book has the full shopping list by tier.

“I’ll kill it.”

You might kill the first one. I killed plenty, and I learned about predatory mites, power outages, and overwatering the expensive way. But here is the thing about growing indoors: it is control, not luck. Outside, a farmer prays for rain. Inside, you set the humidity on a dial. Nearly every failure comes down to one of five things, and each stage of the course exists to catch that stage's failure before it happens. Follow the stages and the plant will meet you more than halfway. Plants want to grow.

“It’s not legal where I live.”

Then do not grow it there, and read Part Six. The rooms, the equipment, and the skills in this book grow legal plants in every state and every country, and people who build a tent for tomatoes tend to have it ready the day the law changes. Check your state's rules; they are changing fast and almost always in one direction.

“What do I tell my family, my landlord, my roommate?”

Tell them you are growing tomatoes, and then grow some tomatoes. More seriously: a sealed tent with a carbon filter is invisible to anyone who does not open it, and most growers simply do not open it in front of people. Where you live with others, the garage and the basement scenarios are built for discretion, and the closet scenario is built for a lease. A tent is furniture. Treat it that way and so will everyone else.

Outside, a farmer prays for rain. Inside, you set the humidity on a dial.

PART SIX

Beyond Cannabis

This is the chapter that turns a cannabis hobby into a growing habit, and it is where Let's Grow Inside is going next. Everything below runs in the same tent, under the same light, with the same skills.



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Herbs and greens — the fast ones

Lettuce, arugula, spinach, kale, basil, cilantro, parsley, mint, and microgreens. These are the plants that make a tent produce every week of the year. They want less light than cannabis, so a light turned down to half power, or a cheap strip light on a shelf, is plenty. They want it cool, around 65 to 70 degrees, which is exactly what a tent is when the big light is off. Most of them are happy in a tray of water with a little nutrient, a method so simple it has no moving parts.

Microgreens go from seed to harvest in seven to fourteen days and are the single easiest thing anyone can grow. Lettuce is thirty to forty-five days and regrows after cutting. Basil takes two months from seed and then produces for half a year. Start a tray every week and you never buy a bag of salad again.

		
Microgreens	Lettuce & greens	Basil & herbs
HARVEST7–14 days	HARVEST30–45 days	HARVEST~60 days, then months
LIGHT12 h, low	LIGHT14–16 h	LIGHT14–16 h
NEEDSa tray and a mist bottle	NEEDScool air, 65–70°	NEEDSwarmth, pinching

14Vegetables and fruit — the ones that surprise people

Cherry tomatoes, peppers, and strawberries are the three that work best indoors, and they are the three that taste most different from the store. They are hungry for light, as much as cannabis or more, so they belong under the main light in the tent rather than on a shelf. Choose dwarf or compact varieties bred for containers: Tiny Tim and Micro Tom tomatoes, small hot and sweet peppers, everbearing strawberries.

The one thing a tent lacks is bees. Tomatoes and peppers pollinate themselves if you shake the plant gently every day or two once it flowers; strawberries want a soft paintbrush run across each blossom. Fourteen to sixteen hours of light, warm days, and the same feeding discipline as a cannabis grow. Expect tomatoes about ten weeks from transplant, in January, from the spare bedroom.

		
Cherry tomatoes	Peppers	Strawberries
HARVEST ~10 wks from transplant	HARVEST 12–16 wks	HARVEST 8–10 wks to first fruit
LIGHT 14–18 h, strong	LIGHT 14–18 h, strong	LIGHT 14–16 h
NEEDS shake to pollinate	NEEDS warmth, patience	NEEDS a paintbrush

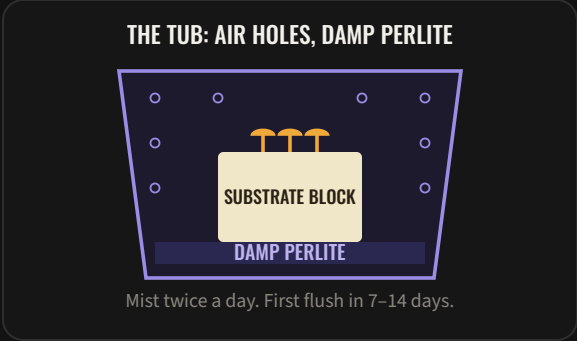
Be the bee. Indoors there is no wind and no insects, so pollination is your job. For tomatoes and peppers, a gentle shake of the stem each day while the plant is flowering is enough. For strawberries, touch every open blossom with a small soft brush. It takes a minute and it is the difference between flowers and fruit.

The tent you bought for one thing grows the next.

15 Mushrooms — the other kingdom

Mushrooms are not plants and they do not want what plants want, which is exactly why they fit so well alongside a grow: they take the spaces and seasons a plant tent cannot use. Oyster mushrooms and lion's mane are the two to start with. They want no grow light at all, just the indirect light of a room. They want it cool, fifty-five to seventy-five degrees, which is a basement or a winter garage. And they want two things plants do not: very high humidity, around ninety percent, and constant fresh air.

The starter setup is a kit: a bag of colonized substrate that you cut open, mist twice a day, and watch. First mushrooms in seven to fourteen days, and two or three flushes from one bag. The next step is a clear tub with holes in the sides and a layer of damp perlite in the bottom, which holds the humidity and lets the air through; after that, a small shelving rack wrapped in plastic with a humidifier, what growers call a Martha tent. Lion's mane tastes like crab. Oyster mushrooms taste like whatever you cook them in. Both cost twenty dollars a pound at a store and almost nothing at home.



Oyster mushrooms

HARVEST	7-14 days from kit
LIGHT	indirect only
NEEDS	90% humidity, fresh air



Lion's mane

HARVEST	10-18 days from kit
LIGHT	indirect only
NEEDS	cool, humid, patient

Coming next from Let's Grow Inside. The course that teaches all of this, herbs, food, and mushrooms, is in the works. The free lesson signup at the end of this book is the list that hears first.

READY TO GROW?

From this book to your first harvest.

I started with no job, no plan, and no idea what a cannabis plant looked like. I learned in somebody else's basement, built my own rooms, designed my own systems, and taught growers around the country. Then a car took me off the road, and I found out that the thing I had been doing all along was teaching.

Everything in this book is something I have done in a room in a house. You can do it in yours. The Indoor Grow Course walks through all five stages on video, filmed in a real 4x8 tent, with the equipment list, the feeding schedules, and every mistake I made so you do not have to.

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HARVEST

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