

Mould (wikipedia) - is a fungus that grows in the form of multicellular filaments called hyphae. In contrast, fungi that can adopt a single-celled growth habit are called yeasts. Moulds are a large and taxonomically diverse number of fungal species in which the growth of hyphae results in discolouration and a fuzzy appearance, especially on food.

Mould is a living organism that belongs to the kingdom Fungi. Fungi are unique in that although some appear plant-like, they are neither plant nor animal. Mould is heterotrophic, meaning it cannot make its own food as plants do. Mould must gain nutrients from other organic substances. Unlike animals, however, mould does not really 'eat' its food. It must absorb nutrition from other organisms. To do this, mould secretes enzymes that break down the food substance into smaller organic molecules that can then be absorbed. If you've ever grabbed a piece of mouldy fruit, you may have felt the soft and mushy area that has essentially been digested.

Although mould itself has no mobility, its hyphae can grow quite long. This is the primary mode used by the mould to spread more quickly to neighbouring organisms. When you see a strawberry in a container that has been engulfed by mould, you can observe the hyphae reaching to the adjoining fruits.

Moulds release small "spores" into the air. So, when mould grows indoors, the number of mould spores and fragments is usually higher indoors than it is outdoors. These spores are small enough that people can actually inhale them deep into the lungs. Inhalation of spores poses the risk of developing respiratory problems. With the exception of winter months, mould spores are always present outdoors.

Mould is a type of fungi that are naturally occurring organisms playing a major role in the ecosystem.

Mould grows best in damp and poorly ventilated areas with limited or no sunlight and reproduces by making spores.

Moulds are present everywhere, indoors and outdoors and can grow in and on materials such as food, furniture, fabrics, carpets, walls, paper, timber and plumbing.

Mould grows on any dead organic matter in nature but is only visible to the human eye when it forms a large colony, called a mycelium.

Mould reproduces via the production of small spores. Their small size makes them easy to disperse via wind and water. They can also travel long distances by clinging on to clothing or fur.

Mould spores can survive environments that don't support normal mould growth. They will only start to grow once they land in an environment with suitable water, food, temperature, and oxygen.

Unlike plants' use of photosynthesis to harness the energy, moulds (and all fungi) rely on organic matter to provide energy. Mould grows on the materials it can digest. These substances are broken down into simple, easy to absorb substances by the secretion of digestive enzymes. This process provides the required 'food' for the mould.

- Temperature: Most moulds cannot grow below 4.4 C. This is why food is typically refrigerated at 3.8° C. Mold grows best between 25° C and 30° C, especially if the air is humid.
- Water: Molds thrive in damp, humid, and wet conditions. They require water to grow and spread, which is why it is recommended to keep homes – especially walls and carpets – as dry as possible. Water leaks, flooding, high humidity, and condensation all provide moisture mould can use to grow and spread.
- Oxygen: Molds are obligate aerobes. This means that they need oxygen to survive. Mould grows even at very low concentrations of oxygen, however, which makes it difficult to fight mould growth by limiting oxygen.
- Food: Mold grows on materials that it can digest – and it can digest a lot. It can metabolize virtually any organic (carbon-containing) matter in nature, making it impossible to remove all food sources of mould from your environment.