

Scientific Names Defined

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This is a comprehensive list of mushroom word roots and combining forms. The best way to understand and remember technical terms is to understand their component parts or roots. The study of the roots of words can become very interesting, not only valuable in understanding what the names of mushrooms mean, but to help you remember various characteristics about that mushroom.

Usually, if the following name is capitalized it is the genus name and if it starts with a small letter it is the species name. I have included prefixes and suffixes and other parts of the name to help you understand what the scientific name means. You will notice the translation often describes the mushroom's color, odor, texture, habitat, or who it was named after, etc.

abietis: of firs; belonging to the genus *Abies*, the true firs

abidus: nearly white, referring to the color of the peridium, which is the outermost layer of a fruiting body, such as a puffball or truffle.

Abortiporus: the pores are born prematurely, referring to the mass of irregular white pores that this mushroom can develop, as well as forming a more normal looking mushroom with an identifiable cap and stalk

abruptibulbus: abrupti = broken away from, steep; bulbus = with a bulb

abundans: means abundant

acerbum: bitter

acericola: living on maple wood

acerrimus: very sharp

acervata/acervatus: in a bundle

acetabulum: means any cup-shaped vessel or a vinegar cup

aceus: resembling (an example is *Coprinus micaceus* which is the inky cap with crystals on its cap resembling mica).

acicula: like a small pin

Acanthobasidium: acantho = a spine, thorn; basidium = a small pedestal

acris: sharp

acuminatus: sharp

acutesquamosa: with pointed scales

acutoconica: sharply conical

acutus: sharp, pointed

adiposa: fat

adonis: refers to the Greek god, Adonis, known for his beauty and desire

adpersum: scattered

adusta/adustus: burnt, scorched

aereus: bronze

aeruginea/aeruginascens/aeruginosus: verdigris or becoming copper green; deep-green with a mixture of blue

affinis: related to

agaricoides: looks like a gilled mushroom

Agaricus: means a sort of tree fungus or gilled mushroom

agathosmus: nice-smelling

agassizii: named for Alexander Agassiz, son of the renowned Swiss geologist Jean Louis Rodolph Agassiz, who was also knowledgeable in botany and was the first person to get what is now called *Lachellula agassizii* identified.

Agrocybe: field cap, a head

alba: white

albida: whitish

albirhiza: albi = white; rhiza = root

albivelatus: with a white veil

alboflavida: albo = white; flavida = yellow

albofragrans: albo = white; fragrans = fragrant

albolanaripes: albo = white; lana = woolly; ripes = river bank, seashore

alboleptonia: albo = white; leptona = slender, fine

alboluteus/albolutescens: albo = white; lutescens = yellow

alboviolaceus: whitish-violet color

album: white

Aleuria: resembling flour

aleuriatus: resembling flour

aleurodiscus: aleuro = resembling flour, mealy; discus = a round plate

alis: pertaining to; an example is *Agrocybe arvalis*

alkalivirens: alkali refers to the alkaline pH; virens = becoming green

Alloclavaria: allo = different, other; clavaria = a small club or pertaining to a club

alnetorum: living on alder

alnicola: living on alder

alniphilus: living on alder

alpina: of the mountains

Alpova: honors A. H. Povah who made many of the collections of this genus in Michigan in 1931

alutacea/alutaceum/alutaceous: resembling fine or soft leather probably referring to the color of the mushroom

Amanita: probably pertaining to Mt. Amanus in Cilicia

amarus: bitter

ambigua: means ambiguous, changeable, uncertain

americana: of America

amethystina: amethyst-colored

amiantinum: pure, spotless, uncontaminated

ammophila: refers to beach grasses which are sand loving; a sandy habitat

amoenolens: pleasant smelling

ammophilus: means sand-living

amorphous: having no definite or clear shape or form

Ampulloclitocybe: ampullo = bottle or flask for holding liquids, referring to the depressed or funnel shape of the cap; clitocybe = pertaining to a sloping head, referring to the shape of the cap

amygdalinus: resembling an almond

Amylocystis: amylo = starch or a cake of fine meal; cystis = a bladder or bag

androsaceus: an unknown marine plant

angelesianus: means 'from Angeles' referring to the type found at Mt. Angeles, Washington

annosum: lives many years

annulatus: has a ring present

Annulohyphoxylon: annulo = a ring; hypoxylon = almost ligneous or wooden because of the texture

anomalus: unusual, irregular

anthracinus: pertaining to coal

anthracophila: charcoal-loving

aphllophorales: without gills

Aphroditeola: an allusion to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess, because of the pretty pink coloration and its perfume-like odor

apiculatus: with a little point

apium: of celery

appendiculatus: a small addition

applanatum/applanatus: flattened, plane; referring to the flat, bracket-like configuration of the mushroom

applicatus: fixed against something

aprica: exposed to the sun, sunny; referring to the habitat of this mushroom

aquifluus: with a watery flow

arcularius: like a paintbox

Arcyria: a net

arenaria: growing in sand such as the habitat of *Geopora arenosa*

arenicola: growing in sand

arenosa: means sandy

areolatum: dry inside

argutus: clear, bright, sharp

Armillaria: wearing a belt or an armband; pertaining to a bracelet

armillatus: with a bracelet

Arrhenia: named for the Swedish botanist Johan Peter Arrhenius

Artomyces: arto = a loaf of bread; myces = a fungus

arvensis: of the fields

arvernensis: thought to refer to the Auvergne region of France after a Gallic tribe that once lived in that area called Arverni.

-ascens/escens: refers to *Hygrocybe nigrescens* which is the fungus that becomes black

Ascocoryne: asco = a sack, a bag, bladder; coryne = a club

Ascomycetes: asco = a sack, a bag, bladder; mycetes = a fungus

aster: star-like

Asterospora: with star-shaped spores

Astraeus: in Greek mythology Astraeus was an astrological deity and the Titan god of dusk; also the father of the four winds

ater: refers to the color black

Atheniella: referring to Athena because of the combination of beautiful coloration and the spear-like stature of the fruiting bodies

-aticus: = refers to a place; *Agaricus silvaticus* is a fungus that grows in the woods under trees

atra: refers to the color black

atramentarius: pertaining to ink or inky black

atrialba: means black and white

atro: refers to the color black

atrotomentosus: atro = black; tomentosus = very velvety

atroviolaceus: atro = black or dark; violaceus = violet

augustus/augusta: majestic

aurantiacus/aurantium/aurantia: refers to the color orange

aurantiidisca: aurantii = the color orange; disca = a round plate

aurantiorugosus: aurantio = golden-yellow; rugosus = wrinkled

aurantisquamosa: auranti = golden-yellow; squamosa = scaly

aurata: golden

aurea: gold-colored

aureifolius: means golden-gilled

aureola: golden

Aureoboletus: aureo = gold, golden; boletus = means a mushroom in general

aureofulvus: aureo = gold; fulvus = reddish

aureus: golden

Auricularia/auricula: ear-like

auricular-judae: Jew's ear

Auriporia: gold, golden, referring to the color; poria = small opening, pores

Auriscalpium: auris = ear; scalpium = 'I scratch' generally meaning ear pick