



How to Cure Cannabis: A Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1: Prepare Your Cannabis

After drying your cannabis flower to the ideal range of water activity (.60 - .62), you're ready to begin the curing process. The leaves should be slightly crispy and the stems inside the flower should not yet snap. 'Leaves are crispy, stems almost snap'. You have the option to leave the flower on the stalk or remove it. While leaving it on the stalk offers a slower and optimal cure, it takes up more space and adds labor. For most, the difference isn't worth it unless you're entering a competition or aiming for the highest standard possible.

Step 2: Trim Your Flower (Optional)

You can choose to trim your flower either between drying and curing or after curing is complete. Trimming between these phases is more efficient, as the leaves are slightly crispy. After curing, sugar leaves become sticky, making trimming more time-consuming. If your flower isn't sticky after curing, it may indicate low trichome content or poor curing. Good curing, however, typically results in stickier flower.

Step 3: Choose the Right Container

Select an appropriate container for curing. While some recommend paper bags or glass jars, we prefer wax-lined kraft barrels. They seal tightly, can be lined, and are easy to roll for mixing. Similar food grade plastic or stainless steel are also available.

Step 4: Fill the Container

Fill the curing container only about 50% full, leaving the other half for gas accumulation. This headspace is essential for the curing process. Place a high-quality hygrometer or Cure Puck on the container, ensuring it's suspended in the air, not buried in the flower.

Step 5: Control the Environment

Place the curing container in an environmentally controlled room with a relative humidity (RH) set to 58% and a temperature of 68°F. Avoid exceeding 60% RH or 70°F, as these settings are crucial. Ensure the dry room, trimming room and curing room have very similar environments. Flower is hygroscopic before cured and can absorb or give off

moisture easily. A common mistake is having poorly controlled trimming environments that over dry flower before curing.

Step 6: Allow for Equilibrium

Let the flower sit in the container for 12 - 24 hours to allow the headspace air to reach equilibrium. At this point, measure the RH and divide it by 100. This number is your water activity (aw).

- 50% - 53% (.50 aw - .53 aw): Very dry, no benefit from curing.
- 54% - 56% (.54 aw - .56 aw): Dry, minor benefit from curing.
- 57% - 59% (.57 aw - .59 aw): Some moisture, some benefit from curing.
- 60% - 62% (.60 aw - .62 aw): Great moisture, significant benefit from curing.
- 63% - 65% (.63 aw - .65 aw): Significant moisture, significant benefit from curing. Risk of mold if not monitored closely.
- 65% and up (.65 aw and up): Too much moisture, needs further drying.

Step 7: Burping the Container

Initiate the burping process. Regularly burp the container to exchange air. This process removes gases like water vapor, CO₂, ethylene, and GLV's. Frequency depends on the rate of gas production and humidity levels. This can range from once an hour to once a day. It is recommended to burp when CO₂ exceeds 800ppm. Always burp when humidity passed 63%.

Step 8: Maintain Optimal Moisture

Consistently maintain an RH of 60% - 62% (.60 aw - .62 aw) for the best curing results. This moisture level enables enzymes to work and respiration to occur.

Step 9: Mix or Fluff Daily

In the early stages of curing, mix or fluff the flower at least once a day. You can do this during the burping process or by rotating the container if you're using a barrel.

Step 10: Continue Monitoring and Burping

Keep monitoring and burping the container as needed. This may require many burping sessions in the first few days. The curing process can take 10 to 21 days or longer for optimal results. After enzymatic activity and respiration stop, little benefit is gained from regular mixing and burping. This can be reduced or stopped.

Step 11: Observe Changes

During the first week of curing, you may notice a slight hay or earthy smell. By weeks 2 to 3, this aroma should dissipate and be replaced by a sweet scent. Stems should start to snap between day 1 and day 5 of curing – longer if a slow cure is desired. Stickiness of the

flower should start to increase 2 – 3 days into curing. The aroma should shift from individual terpene notes to a medley of those notes.

Step 12: Check for Quality Indicators

A well-cured flower should have snapping stems and be sticky. When squeezed, it should bounce back like a fresh marshmallow, sticking to your fingers. It should maintain moisture in dry environments, not becoming dry and crumbly. Most importantly, it should provide a smooth, clean smoking experience.

Using the Cure Puck: A Step-by-Step Guide

- Ensure your room conditions align with the recommended environments.
- When the drying flower reaches a water activity of .63, trim it and then transfer it to the curing container.
- Adjust the Cure Puck settings to "burp" daily. Refer to the Cure Puck help menu for duration based on container size.
- Set the upper relative humidity (RH) limit to 62%. The pump activates when this level is exceeded.
- Set the lower RH limit to 60%. The pump deactivates once the humidity drops to this level.
- Stir or shuffle the flower daily to ensure even curing.
- Gradually reduce the upper and lower RH limits throughout the curing process. This rate depends on factors like container size, water activity, room conditions, flower genetics, and flower density.
- Aim for a slower moisture removal process to optimize the duration of enzymatic activity.

