

Instructions for Filling Out the Voucher Slip

Note: You are trying to "paint a mental picture" for the person holding your specimen (which has been taken out of its natural context), so they can imagine seeing what you saw and experienced when you encountered it (this aids the person who has to identify it for you!). The voucher slip asks you to fill in details about WHERE the specimen came from (i.e., the Locality including the geographic location where you made the collection, as well as a description of the terrain and what kind of habitat it was found in) and WHAT the specimen itself was like (i.e., the Specimen Description - what was its size, shape, color, texture, smell, etc.)

Collector	Usually the first initial and last name of the collector (and anyone else with them)
Date	Date of collection, including day, month, and year
Genus, species	If you know the identity then include the Latin name or common name
Location/GPS	Record GPS coordinates, elevation if known (but nowadays this can be determined later if the coordinates are known), & description of geographic location (e.g., City, County & State, and/or park, reserve, etc.). Be sure to include units for the coordinate system you are using (UTM or decimal degrees, or degrees/minutes/seconds) and indicate either feet or meters for elevation.
Terrain	Describe the physical habitat/substrate (e.g. abiotic factors like like "dry creek bed" or "granite outcrop" or "mountainous" or "flat field", etc.). Was the specimen in a sunny or shady spot?
Slope?	If you are standing on a hillslope (e.g., in a canyon or on a mountainside) then which direction are you facing?
Description of Vegetation/Habitat	What is the dominant vegetation in the vicinity of the collected specimen? You may use specific community or vegetation types (e.g., chaparral, coastal sage scrub, conifer forest, riparian woodland, desert scrub, grassland, etc.) and/or name specific plants seen in the tree, shrub, & herb layers. This helps with specimen identification! For habitat say whether it is aquatic (freshwater or marine?) or terrestrial and also use general descriptions (e.g., field, forest, pond, river, swamp, alpine, etc.).
Description of Substrate	What was the specimen growing on? (e.g., soil, rock, living or dead wood, duff, another plant/insect/animal, etc.). If rock or soil, do you know what kind (e.g., granitic, gabbro, basalt, sedimentary rock, or sand/silt/clay soil?) Use the back of the slip if you need more space.
Description of Specimen	Describe features of the whole specimen (because you may have only collected and brought back a part of it) such as height, cap shape, color, presence of gills, pores, veils, or how it responded to any bruising or chemical spot tests, etc.
Spore Print Description	If you made a spore print what color was it? General groupings are white, pink, ochre (rust/brown) or blackish-violet. Record notes about spore shape/size if you happened to look at them under the microscope. This is not necessary, but helps with identification.
Taste/Odor	Not required! Use caution since some mushrooms are poisonous!
Photo ID #	Record some kind of photo number to help you match the photo with the specimen later (consider pre-printing numbered labels that you can tear off and include in the photo to help match the photo and field data later). For example print out a sheet of labels before your trip, like ML#1, ML#2, ML#3 (for Mono Lake specimen number 1, 2, 3, etc.) and pre-cut them so you just tear them off as needed to include in the photo, then pop it inside the bag/packet along with the specimen (or pin it onto the specimen with straight pin).
Mycologist ID #	This is IMPORTANT! Always number your specimens!! Mark the number on the outside of the bag/packet and write it down in your notes as well as on the voucher slip!
Comments	On the back of the voucher slip you can jot down any additional notes e.g., how many in the total population, what size area did it cover, was there anything with the specimen (insects, predators, pathogens, etc.), was it associated with a particular plant or insect, was the area previously burned or disturbed, did the population appear to be healthy/thriving or declining, etc.
Voucher #	Leave blank - if you end up vouchering your specimen later in a museum collection, they will provide you with a formal Voucher ID number to track it in their collection and/or in their online searchable database.