

Cannabis for Beginner's

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO FIND
WHAT WORKS

Featuring
THE PLANT MENU

by: TAMMY REILLY

To Jake

Your insight, perspective, and support is
everything to me. I love you.

Mom

PUBLISHED BY: Tammy Reilly

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

[WELCOME](#)

[THE RISKS](#)

[THE PLAN](#)

[Set a Goal](#)

[Choose the Environment](#)

[Plan Your Experience](#)

[SELECT A PRODUCT](#)

[Intake Method](#)

[Plant Profile](#)

[Species](#)

[Cannabinoids](#)

[Terpenes](#)

[Potency](#)

[HOW TO READ A LABEL](#)

[CONTROL YOUR EXPERIENCE](#)

[START LOW - GO SLOW](#)

[MANAGING OVERCONSUMPTION](#)

[THE NEXT STEP](#)

WELCOME

This book is for anyone who wants to feel more confident using cannabis, especially if you're new, or returning after some time away.

At the center of it is something called *The Plant Menu*, a new way to look at cannabis. It's based on the idea of a universal menu: a list of categories and options that are unique to the product but used everywhere. Like the universal coffee menu, which helps us customize a drink anywhere in the world, *The Plant Menu* breaks cannabis down into six categories that shape the experience.

These categories aren't random, they're grounded in the science of how cannabis works and what the research says so far.

Once you understand the menu, you understand cannabis.

You'll be able to predict how a product might make you feel, tell the difference between two similar options, and find what works best to support your goals, whether that's better sleep, more focus, pain relief, or something else.

But before we get to the menu, this guide starts with what matters most for new users:

- What are my risks?
- How to make a plan.
- How to control my dose and stay in control.

The goal is simple: to help you have better experiences with cannabis, and make it easier to find what works for *you*.

Important Disclaimer

I am not a medical professional, and this book is not medical advice. The information provided is for educational purposes only. If you have any health concerns or are taking medications, consult your doctor before using cannabis. Always follow local laws and regulations regarding cannabis use.

THE RISKS

Cannabis is generally safe for most healthy adults when used responsibly, but it's important to be aware of the potential risks.

Your body's reaction will depend on the product, dose, and your unique physiology.

It is impossible to predict exactly how you will react. Consider this before you begin and check with your doctor if you have any concerns!

- **Medical Conditions:** Can impact folks with mental, cardiovascular, respiratory and neurological conditions.
- **Drug Interactions:** Can make other drugs stronger, weaker, or ineffective. Check with your doctor or pharmacist.
- **Drug Testing:** Even a small amount of THC can produce a positive test result.

- Pregnancy/Nursing: Can be transferred to the baby. There are expert medical professionals who can help you manage your use during pregnancy.
- Mental Health: Consider your emotional and mental well-being before use.
- Legal Compliance: Know and follow the laws in your area.
- Doctor Support: May affect ongoing medical care - verify with your provider.

The medical route is available for all Canadians either through cannabis clinics in your area or online. They can help you manage your cannabis journey, issue a medical document, and connect you with medical suppliers. Some patients will even qualify for discounts. Do not hesitate to contact a clinic and see if cannabis is right for you.

THE PLAN

Preparation is key to building confidence and comfort. Start by defining your goals and setting up the right environment for your experience.

Set a Goal

- This doesn't have to be complex but knowing what you want to achieve will guide your product selection.

Choose the Environment

- Pick a safe, relaxing space. Start at home instead of a busy public place.
- Decide if you'll use cannabis alone or with someone you trust. A friend can help if you feel anxious or overwhelmed.
- Choose a low-stress time with no obligations. Evening may be ideal but avoid it if you have early commitments the next day.

Plan Your Experience

- Prepare snacks in advance. Whether it's a bag of chips or a charcuterie board, having food ready will help you manage the munchies that often come with cannabis use.
- Stay hydrated. Cannabis can make your eyes dry, and your mouth might feel like cotton. Have drinks ready but avoid alcohol.
- Cue up some movies to avoid having to make that decision if you need some quiet time. Comedies like *Pineapple Express* and *Bridesmaids* are highly recommended.
- Put your keys away. Cannabis causes impairment and driving under the influence is unsafe and illegal.

SELECT A PRODUCT

Selecting a product can be overwhelming for even experienced users. In this section, you will learn what to expect from the different options and how to select a product that supports your goal. Here's how.

THE UNIVERSAL MENU

A Universal Menu is a list of categories and options that sets one product apart from another. We make our choices based on what is available, what we like, and how it makes us feel.

The Coffee Menu is an example of how powerful a universal menu can be. Wherever we are in the world, it is understood that honey, syrup and sugar are all sweeteners and a decaf will produce a different experience than a bold espresso.

The Plant Menu is the cannabis version. Each category affects the experience in different ways, and it is all based on what science has learned about the plant so far.

You may find that your experience is the opposite of what you read. Like caffeine, your reaction is unique to you. Keep track of what is working using the journal in the back of the book.

the

plant

menu

INTAKE METHOD

Onset Time & Duration

Inhalation

1-5 mins

2-4 hours

Ingestion

30min-2hrs

6-12 hrs

Absorption

5-30 mins

1-4 hrs

PLANT PROFILE

Full Spectrum

THC + 100+

Broad Spectrum

CBD + 100+

Isolate/Distillate

Single Compound

SPECIES

Sativa

Energy & Focus

Indica

Calm & Relaxing

Hybrid

Balanced

CANNABINOIDS

THC

Useful for pain, sore muscles, relaxation, euphoria, sleep, headaches, harm reduction, & elevation.

CBD

Useful for pain, inflammation, anxiety, appetite suppression, neuroprotective, overall wellbeing.

CBG

Non-impairing. Used for pain, sleep, appetite.

CBN

Mildly to non-impairing. Useful for pain & sleep.

THCV

Causes impairment. Used for energy & stress.

TERPENES

Myrcene:

Sleep, pain relief, anti-inflammatory

Humulene:

Suppress appetite & pain

Pinene:

Uplifting and can help with focus

Ocimene:

Uplifting effects. An anti-bacterial

Terpinolene:

Sedating, pain, anti-inflammatory

Limonene:

Euphoric effects. Helpful anti-depressant

Linalool:

Calming and sedating

Beta-Caryophyllene:

Reduces anxiety, relieves pain

POTENCY

Low.....

0 - 10

Moderate.....

10 - 20

High.....

20 - 30

Concentrate....

over 30

For educational purposes only.

The Plant Menu is as simple as it looks. There are 6 categories that affect the experience.

Intake Method

The way you consume cannabis affects how quickly you'll feel the effects and how long they last. Many people use different methods for their unique needs. There are 3 options.

Inhalation: Effects are felt quickly as the product enters the lungs and moves to the brain. Onset: 1-5 minutes Duration: 2-4 hours. Used for: Quick relief, pain management, inducing hunger, sleep, recreation. Includes bong, joints, vapes, pipes, dry herb vaporizers.

Ingestion: Anything swallowed takes longer to kick in (due to liver processing) but can last up to 12 hours. Onset: 30 minutes to 2 hours Duration: 6-12 hours Used for: Chronic pain, sleep, convenience, precise dosing, preference for non-smokers. Edibles, oils, capsules, tinctures, drinks

Absorption: Oral sprays and suppositories act quickly, while creams and bath products may take 30 minutes. Topicals don't cause impairment, but mucosal products can. Onset: 5-30 minutes Duration: 1-4 hours (suppositories up to 12 hours) Used for: Pain relief, skin conditions, relaxation, non-inhalation quick relief.

Plant Profile

Cannabis produces hundreds of compounds, with THC and CBD being the most well-known. These compounds work together to create powerful, therapeutic effects, called the Entourage Effect. Flower products have all the compounds intact while extractions can contain all or just 1 depending on the extraction process. The profile is identified in 1 of 3 ways.

Full Spectrum products preserve the entire plant profile, including THC, CBD, terpenes, and flavonoids. Users benefit from the entourage effect, which greatly enhances medicinal value. Examples include rosin, live-resin, hash, and kief, which can be sold as concentrates or infused into various products.

Broad Spectrum extracts have had THC removed but retain many other beneficial compounds. This allows users with low THC tolerance to still benefit from the entourage effect without the risk of impairment. Broad spectrum products are available in various forms and are often more prevalent through medical cannabis channels.

Isolates/Distillate hold only one cannabinoid, typically THC or CBD, in its purest form. Odorless and tasteless, isolates are often used in edibles, drinks, capsules, topicals, and other products. Many vapes and cartridges use THC distillate combined with botanical terpenes to create unique blends.

Species

While originally referring to specific cannabis plant species, these terms are now commonly used to describe the intended effects of a product. It's important to note that the categorization and strain names are at the discretion of the producer, and terpene profiles often provide a more reliable indicator of what to expect. There are 3 options.

Sativa Often associated with energizing and stimulating effects. Used for focus, creativity, and socializing.

Indica Known for producing a body high with calming and relaxing effects. Used for sleep and relaxation.

Hybrid Offers a balanced experience, combining effects from both Sativa and Indica. Can lean towards either side.

Cannabinoids

Cannabinoids is the term used to describe THC, CBD, and other minor compounds in the plant. We have extensive information about the main cannabinoids but very little on the minor ones.

For first-time users or those concerned about impairment, CBD dominant or balanced products can be a gentler option. However, there's no universally "correct" choice. The best product is the one that aligns with your goals and comfort level.

THC: Useful for pain, sore muscles, relaxation, euphoria, sleep, headaches, harm reduction, and elevation. Side effects can include impairment, dizziness, anxiety, dry mouth, red eyes, lethargy, increased heart rate.

CBD: Useful for pain, inflammation, anxiety, appetite suppression, neuroprotective, overall wellbeing. Side effects may include drug interactions, low blood pressure, either drowsiness or insomnia, dry mouth, and red eyes.

Minor Cannabinoids have very little research to back up the claims and are based on mostly anecdotal evidence.

CBG: Non-impairing. Useful for pain, sleep, and inducing appetite.

CBN: Mildly to non-impairing. Used for sleep and pain.

THCV: Causes impairment. Used for energizing effects and stress.

For a more complex and enhanced experience, full-spectrum and broad-spectrum products, holding a wider range of cannabinoids and terpenes, are often preferred.

Terpenes

Terpenes play a key role in personalizing your cannabis experience, helping products align with the effects you're looking for. Often referred to as the "essential oils" of cannabis, terpenes manage the plant's flavour and scent.

Beyond aroma, terpenes contribute to the physiological effects of cannabis, even in tiny amounts. There are hundreds of them, each offering unique benefits.

Below are eight of the most popular with their common characteristics.

Myrcene: Found in mangos and hops. Contributes to sedating effects. Analgesic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic.

Beta- Caryophyllene: Found in black pepper. Strong anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anxiolytic (reduces anxiety), neuroprotective.

Terpinolene: Found in tea tree and lilac. Can be sedating. Anti-bacterial, anxiolytic, anti-fungal, antioxidant.

Limonene: Found in citrus rind. Contributes to euphoric effects. Anti-depressant, anti-fungal, anti-inflammatory, anxiolytic.

Linalool: Found in indica strains and lavender. Calming, sedative, anxiolytic, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antidepressant.

Humulene: Found in hops and ginseng. Anorectic (can suppress appetite), analgesic, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial.

Ocimene: Found in mint and parsley.
Contributes to uplifting effects. Antibacterial,
antiviral, expectorant.

Pinene: Found in pine trees and rosemary.
Can help with focus & concentration.
Analgesic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory.

Potency

Potency refers to the concentration of THC and CBD in a product. The higher the number, the stronger the effects.

Potency of flower, vapes, pre-rolls, and concentrates are measured as a percentage. 152 mg/g is equal to 15.2% potency. Simply move the decimal to the left 1 spot or divide by 10. This strength would be considered moderately potent.

Edibles, capsules, strips, drinks, and topicals are expressed as mg/unit or mg/pack. A 10mg gummy is a low to moderate potency. If there are 2 gummies per pack, it is written as 5 mg/unit, 10mg/pack.

Oils are expressed as mg/ml. Sometimes you have to do the math to get the potency. A 30ml container with 500mg of THC is 16mg/g which is moderate potency. (500 divided by 30 = 24.)

The industry has yet to decide on what numbers “officially” represent potency levels so I made this scale that you can use as a reference.

POTENCY SCALE	
LOW.....	0-10
MODERATE.....	10-20
HIGH.....	20-30
CONCENTRATE.....	30+
FOR USE AS A GUIDE	

HOW TO READ A LABEL

The amount of THC and CBD in a product is displayed on the label of all regulated products

in Canada, but they can be confusing. The “Total” amount is the actual potency of the product once it is activated. These are the important numbers.

“THC OR CBD” alone is the potency before the product is heated to activate the cannabinoids. This will be removed on packaging by 2026 due to the confusion it is causing.

Product Name
Pack Size
THC = Potency consumed as is
Total THC/THC Total = Potency after activation
CBD = Potency consumed as is
Total CBD/CBD Total = Potency after activation

Wedding Cake
3.5g Dried Cannabis
THC 10mg/g
Total THC/THC Total 287mg/g (28.7%)
CBD <.5mg/g
Total CBD/CBD Total .5mg/g (.1%)

eg: THC potency of Wedding Cake is 28.7% and CBD is .1% which is negligible.

CONTROL YOUR EXPERIENCE

Dosing is one of the most important and often overlooked aspects of using cannabis. It's the difference between a pleasant, enjoyable experience and one that leaves you feeling uncomfortable or overwhelmed.

START LOW - GO SLOW

There is no standard dose and you will not know what is the right amount for you until you try it. Beginners are encouraged to start with a low dose and gradually increase the amount as needed. This approach allows you to find your ideal dose without the risk of overconsumption.

Inhalation:

Effects are felt within minutes, making it easier to control your dose.

- Start with 1-2 puffs and wait 1 hour before taking more.

Ingestion:

Effects take 30 minutes to 2 hours to kick in but can last 6-12 hours.

- Begin with 2.5-5 mg of THC and wait at least 2 hours before consuming more.

- Beginners and high-risk users may start at a lower 1mg dose and increase by 1mg at a time, every 2-3 hours.

Absorption:

Effects are felt within 15-45 minutes when taken sublingually (under the tongue).

- Start with a small dose (e.g., 2.5-5 mg) and adjust as needed. Topicals that are on skin will not cause impairment, but always test a small area and follow the directions on packaging.

MANAGING OVERCONSUMPTION

Start Low - Go Slow can be underwhelming for some and you may be tempted to speed things up. Here are the signs and solutions if you take too much.

Signs of Overconsumption:

- Anxiety, paranoia, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, or nausea.

Solutions:

- Stay calm and remind yourself the effects are temporary.

- Drink water, eat a snack, or rest in a quiet, comfortable space.
- Use CBD to counteract THC's effects, as it may help reduce anxiety and discomfort.
- Seek medical help.

THE NEXT STEP

Now that you have the information to make informed choices and create experiences that work for you, it's time to put everything into practice.

Let's recap:

- **Determine Risks:** Consider the risks and decide if cannabis is right for you. See a doctor if you have any concerns.
- **Make a Plan:** Set yourself up for success by creating the right environment.
- **Choose a Product.** Use The Plant Menu as your guide and choose products that support your goals.
- **Control Your Experience:** Start with a safe dose, adjust as needed, and move forward at the speed that is most comfortable for you.

Cannabis can be complicated, but it doesn't have to be. With a bit of knowledge and a clear plan, you can feel more confident, avoid common mistakes, and get closer to the results you want.

It's a plant. You've got this.

If you have questions or want to learn more, you can find me at: tammy@itsaplant.ca, [It's A Plant](#), or follow me on social media.

I'd love to hear how it's going.


Take good care,

Tammy

PS: If this book was helpful to you and you want to support my work, please purchase a printed copy [here](#).

I appreciate your support!

Use the worksheet to keep track of your experiences. Download your free copy [here](#).



THE WORKSHEET

MAKE A PLAN

Who:	Where:
When:	Why:

CHOOSE A PRODUCT

<p style="text-align: center;">INTAKE METHOD</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Inhalation <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Ingestion <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Absorption <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Inhalation <input type="checkbox"/>	Ingestion <input type="checkbox"/>	Absorption <input type="checkbox"/>	<p style="text-align: center;">PLANT PROFILE</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Full Spectrum <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Broad Spectrum <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Isolate <input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Full Spectrum <input type="checkbox"/>	Broad Spectrum <input type="checkbox"/>	Isolate <input type="checkbox"/>							
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PRODUCT DETAILS

ex: Brand Name Pack Size Price

PRODUCT NOTES

ex: Rating out of 5, memorable moments.

INHALATION

THC: Start dose 1-2 puffs.
CBD: Start with 2-3 puffs.
Wait 1 hour between puffs.
High potency = Less puffs.

CONTROL YOUR DOSE

Start Low-Go Slow

INGESTION

THC: Start dose 2.5mg-5mg. Increase by 1mg. CBD: Starting dose 5mg. Increase by 5mg.
Wait 2 hours between doses

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