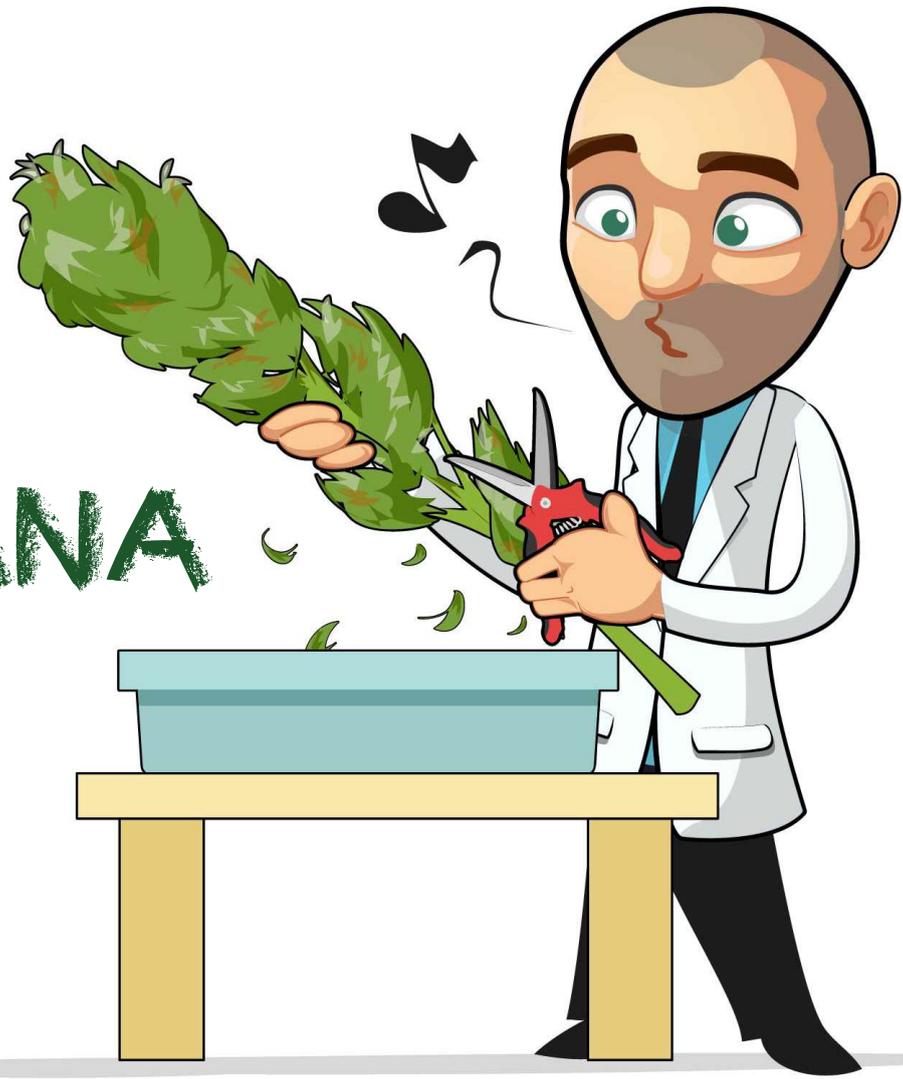




When to
harvest your

MARIJUANA PLANTS

By Robert Bergman





There are different ways to determine whether your marijuana is ready to be harvested. One is more accurate than the other. The moment of harvesting partly determines the taste, scent and the effect of the cannabis. You can compare it to wine; the later a grape is harvested, the more sugar it contains and the more alcohol it will produce.

If you harvest marijuana a bit early, the taste and the effects will be a bit lighter than when you let your plants ripen a little longer. If you harvest your

marijuana too late, it will have a very heavy taste and a narcotic effect. So it's a matter of preference, and you're going to have to experiment a bit with this to see what you like best.

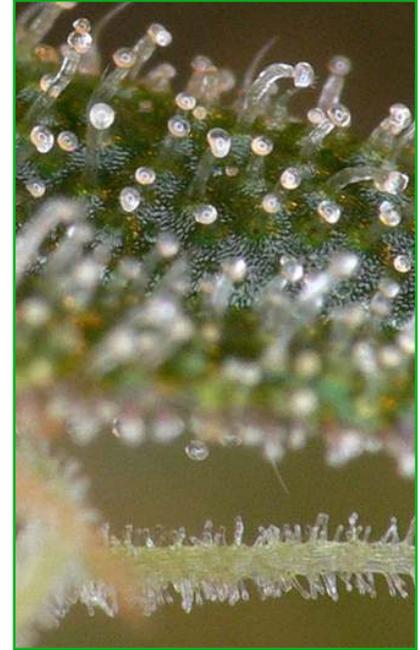
In this short document I will tell you about the different methods to determine if your marijuana is ready for harvest. You can look at the flowering time of the plant, the color of the pistils or the color of the resin.



Flowering time



Pistils



Trichomes

HARVESTING BASED ON FLOWERING TIME

From the time you let a marijuana plant flower, it takes a certain period before it's ready to be harvested. This varies a bit for each type, but it generally comes down to this:



Week 6



Week 7



Week 8

Indica: From the moment you're letting an indica dominant strain flower, it takes 8 weeks before you can harvest it. If you're growing outdoors, it will be ready by the end of September.

Sativa: A sativa has a longer flowering period, originally 12 weeks. But there are many fast types of haze nowadays that are ready after 9 or 10 weeks. If you order seeds online, you always

have to check the duration of the flowering period. Sativa that's grown outdoors will be ready around the end of October.

Auto flower: Autoflowers don't depend on a light cycle and will flower automatically. From the time the seedling sticks its head above the soil, it takes 10 weeks for it to be ready.



Indica week 6



Indica week 7



Indica week 8

This method isn't very accurate, but it's a good starting point if you want to develop a schedule for your harvesting periods. There is a more accurate way to determine whether your marijuana is ready for harvest, that also allows you to influence the taste and the effects.

HARVESTING BASED ON PISTILS

The easiest way to determine if a bud is ripe for harvesting is by checking its pistils. If the buds are starting to develop, they're all white, and they'll start to discolor around the fourth week of flowering.

If most pistils are white, the marijuana isn't ripe enough for harvest and the bud is still lacking a lot of weight and THC. If all pistils are brown/red, you're actually too late, and the quality of your marijuana will rapidly drop.

So you have to make sure you're right between these two ends. These usually are the standard rules:

0-49% of the pistils are brown – Not ready yet.

50-70% of the pistils are brown – Ready for harvest, but it's still a bit young. Light taste and

mellow high. Maximum weight not yet achieved.

70-90% of the pistils are brown – Ready for harvest. Taste and effect are at their peak and you've achieved maximum weight.

90-100% of the pistils brown –

Almost too late for harvest.

Taste is heavy and the effect is narcotic.

Harvest right away and don't wait any longer.



HARVESTING BASED ON PISTILS



40% of pistils brown



60% of pistils brown



80% of pistils brown



95% of pistils brown

I usually harvest marijuana for personal use when 2/3 of the pistils are brown. I harvest the marijuana I grow for a coffee shop when 80 percent of the pistils are brown, because the buds will be a bit heavier this way.

You have to find out what you like best. You just have to harvest a bit in every stage and compare during the first batches. In the morning, I prefer a young, uplifting weed the most. But a bud with 100% brown pistils can also be delicious after a long, stressful day. It just depends a bit on the moment.



HARVESTING BASED ON RESIN

When you look at the resin of a bud through a magnifying glass, you'll see that the glands are enlarged, depending on the stage of the flowering period. They are a bit deformed and translucent at first, but they become rounder and amber colored during ripening.

As soon as the largest part of the resin is round, shiny, sticky and translucent, the plant is ripe. After this, the trichomes connect to oxygen and become amber colored (color of honey). From that moment on, the resin starts to deteriorate. So harvest right away if you see many amber colored resin beads.



Clear trichomes



Milky trichomes



Amber trichomes



Clear trichomes – the plant has insufficient potential to be harvested

Milky white trichomes – the plant has sufficient potential to be harvested

Amber trichomes – the plant has passed its prime, so don't wait too much longer

Once again, there are a number of stages that all give their own taste and effect to the weed. I would also check the color of the pistils, but this is nice to track if you have a magnifying glass.

When does the quality decrease?

If you let your plants grow for too long, it will harm the quality. The buds won't become heavier, the scent decreases, the taste becomes heavy and sharp and it will have a narcotic effect. Waiting too long therefore doesn't have a single advantage.

These are the most important changes that indicate overripe weed:

Completely red pistils

Swelling and deformation of the calyxes

Widening of the stem

Resin turning brown

If you notice any of these changes, immediately grab a pair of pruning shears and start harvesting your plants.

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