

DMT & Me

The chemistry, the mimosa bark extraction, dosing from threshold to breakthrough, the experience, harm reduction, and integration. Everything start to finish.

Legal notice. DMT is a Schedule I controlled substance in the United States and restricted in most countries. This guide is harm reduction information for people making informed decisions. Know your legal environment. Extraction involves flammable solvents — no open flames, work outdoors or with ventilation. The author assumes no liability for use of this information.

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01 What Is DMT

The molecule, endogenous origins, pharmacology

02 History & Culture

Ayahuasca traditions, Strassman's research, the modern era

03 Mimosa Hostilis & Source Plants

Why MHRB, alkaloid content, testing your bark

04 Equipment

Full list — what you need, what helps, what to skip

05 The Extraction

STB, naphtha pulls, freeze precipitation, evaporation

06 Testing Your Extract

Ehrlich, Mecke, fentanyl strip — what to look for

07 Vaporizing Your Extract

Devices, technique, the inhale, what not to do

08 Dosing Guide

Threshold to breakthrough, measuring accurately

09 The Experience

Onset through return — what to expect, what not to fight

10 Harm Reduction

Contraindications, interactions, sitter protocol, device safety

11 Integration

P A R T 01

What Is DMT

The molecule, the brain, and why it's different

N,N-Dimethyltryptamine. The name is a mouthful for something the human body already makes. DMT is an endogenous tryptamine — it has been detected in human blood, urine, and cerebrospinal fluid, though what role it plays physiologically is still genuinely unknown. The pineal gland theory got popular in the 1990s thanks to Rick Strassman's research and a lot of people ran with it further than the evidence supports. What we actually know is more interesting than the mythology: your brain has the enzymatic machinery to produce this compound, and when you introduce it from outside at psychoactive doses, it does something no other substance quite replicates.

Mechanically it works like psilocin and LSD — 5-HT_{2A} agonism is the primary driver. But the onset is measured in seconds, the peak is 10 to 20 minutes, and the experiential intensity per minute is unlike anything else in this class. That combination is why it has its own category in most people's minds even though the receptor pharmacology isn't that different from other classical psychedelics.

It is found in hundreds of plants worldwide. *Mimosa hostilis* root bark — MHRB — is the most common extraction source because the DMT concentration is high, the plant material is widely available, and the chemistry is well understood. That's what this guide covers.

One molecule, two very different experiences. Smoked or vaporized freebase DMT and ayahuasca both deliver N,N-DMT to the brain but the experience is not the same. Duration, intensity, context, and pharmacology differ significantly. This guide covers the vaporized freebase route only.

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P A R T 02

History & Culture

Where this came from and who got here first

DMT has been in human use for a long time — just not in the form most people encounter it today. The indigenous traditions of the Amazon basin have worked with DMT-containing plants for centuries, primarily through ayahuasca — a brew that combines a DMT-containing plant with a separate MAOI-containing vine, usually *Banisteriopsis caapi*. The MAOI is what makes oral DMT active. Without it, digestive enzymes break DMT down before it reaches the bloodstream. Whoever figured that out first, working empirically with hundreds of plants in a pre-scientific context, did something remarkable.

Ayahuasca is a ceremonial medicine in that tradition — not a recreational substance, not something taken casually. That context matters even if you are not participating in it. The compound has a history that predates Western chemistry by a significant margin.

On the Western side: DMT was first synthesized by Canadian chemist Richard Manske in 1931. Its psychoactive properties were not documented until the 1950s, when Hungarian chemist and ethnobotanist Stephen Szara self-administered a DMT extract and recorded the effects. In the 1990s, psychiatrist Rick Strassman ran the first federally approved human psychedelic research in decades at the University of New Mexico, administering intravenous DMT to volunteers and systematically documenting the results. His book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule* brought the compound to mainstream awareness. His research was rigorous. Some of the conclusions people drew from it went further than the data supported.

Smoked or vaporized freebase DMT — what this guide covers — is a modern Western phenomenon. It produces a dramatically different experience than ayahuasca in duration, intensity, and context. Same molecule, completely different encounter.

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Mimosa Hostilis & Source Plants

The bark, the alkaloids, and confirming what you have

Mimosa hostilis — sold and sourced as Mimosa tenuiflora, same plant — is a shrub native to northeastern Brazil and parts of Mexico. The root bark is where the alkaloids concentrate. MHRB powder is the most practical starting point for extraction: the grinding is already done, surface area is maximized, and the DMT content is well documented. Dry root bark runs roughly 1 to 2% DMT by weight, with variance depending on origin, plant age, and storage conditions.

Why mimosa over other sources? Phalaris grass, acacia varieties, and changa blends all contain N,N-DMT but the concentrations are lower, the chemistry is less predictable, or the material is harder to source consistently. MHRB hits a practical sweet spot — high alkaloid content, widely available, extensively documented extraction chemistry.

When you receive your bark powder it should be a reddish-brown color with a faintly astringent, earthy smell. Before running any extraction, confirm you have what you think you have.

TESTING YOUR BARK — EHRLICH REAGENT

Place a small amount of bark powder — a few milligrams — on a white ceramic surface or test card. Add one drop of Ehrlich reagent. Watch for 3 to 5 minutes. A purple to violet color change is a positive result for indole alkaloids. DMT is an indole. This confirms the plant material is legitimate. It will not distinguish DMT from NMT or other indoles present in the bark, but combined with a known source and the visual and smell characteristics above, it is strong confirmation before you invest time in an extraction.

No color change on your bark means stop. A negative Ehrlich on MHRB powder means something is wrong — wrong plant material, degraded stock, or adulterated product. Do not proceed with extraction.

Equipment

Regular kitchen, regular hardware store

You probably have most of this already. Nothing here requires a lab or specialty supplier.

THE BASICS

Large stainless steel pot	4 to 6 quart — the kind you'd make soup in
Electric hot plate or induction burner	Ceramic or induction top only — no exposed coil elements near solvents
Wide-mouth quart mason jars	At least 3 — for pulls and storage
Turkey baster	For separating solvent layers
Kitchen scale accurate to 0.1g	A decent coffee scale works for bark and lye
Jeweler's scale accurate to 0.01g	Required for dosing — DMT doses are measured in milligrams
pH strips	Aquarium or homebrew store, cheap
Nitrile gloves and safety glasses	Lye burns skin and eyes — non-negotiable
Kitchen thermometer	For monitoring slurry temperature during extraction

FROM THE HARDWARE STORE

VM&P naphtha	Paint section — not lighter fluid. VM&P specifically.
100% sodium hydroxide (lye)	Roebic Crystal Drain Opener — check the label says nothing else

FOR CLEANUP AND FINISHING

Glass baking dish	The kind you'd roast vegetables in — for final evaporation
Coffee filters	
Freezer-safe mason jar with lid	For freeze precipitation step

TESTING SUPPLIES

Ehrlich reagent test kit	DanceSafe or similar
Mecke reagent test kit	
Fentanyl test strips	

Total spend outside what you have is roughly \$60 to \$80 including the naphtha and lye. The jeweler's scale is another \$15 to \$20 if you don't have one — don't skip it.

The Extraction

STB, three pulls, freeze precipitation, freebase

Set up outside or with serious ventilation before you start. The moment naphtha comes out, you need moving air. Naphtha vapor is heavier than air — it sinks and pools at floor level. Work on a patio, in a garage with the door open, or at a window with a fan running. No open flames, no gas burners, no pilot lights nearby.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND WHY

Mimosa bark contains DMT bound up in plant material alongside fats, waxes, and other alkaloids. The extraction has two jobs: free the DMT from the plant matrix, then pull it selectively into a solvent that separates cleanly from water. Lye does the first job by making the solution strongly basic, which converts DMT salts into their freebase form. Naphtha does the second — it's nonpolar, so it pulls the freebase DMT out while leaving most of the water-soluble plant material behind. Freeze precipitation and slow evaporation then clean and concentrate what you pulled.

QUANTITIES FOR A FIRST RUN

Start with 100g of MHRB powder. At 1 to 2% alkaloid content with real-world extraction losses, expect 100 to 200mg of finished product. Some runs do better, some do worse. Don't optimize until you've done it once.

- 1 Make your base solution.** Fill your pot with 750ml of water. Bring to a gentle simmer. Slowly add 50g of lye to the water, stirring as you go. Always lye to water, never water to lye. The mixture will heat significantly — this is normal. Let cool slightly, then add your 100g of MHRB powder and stir until uniform. Keep warm, around 140 to 150°F, for the pull steps.
The slurry will be deep reddish-brown to near black — that's correct.
- 2 First naphtha pull.** Ladle warm slurry into a quart mason jar until about two-thirds full. Add 100ml of VM&P naphtha on top. Put the lid on and gently invert 20 to 30 times — slow, deliberate movements. Crack the lid to release pressure after each inversion. Let sit undisturbed 10 to 15 minutes for layers to separate. Use your turkey baster to carefully draw off the top naphtha layer into a clean mason jar. This is your first pull jar.
Naphtha floats. Dark slurry sinks. Two clean layers is what you want before drawing off.
- 3 Second and third pulls.** Add another 100ml of fresh naphtha to your slurry jar. Repeat the inversion process, wait for separation, draw off and add to your pull collection jar. Do this a third time. Three pulls captures the majority of available DMT. All three pulls go into the same collection jar. The dark slurry goes down the drain.
- 4 Freeze precipitation.** Put a tight lid on your pull jar and place in the freezer for at least 8 hours — overnight is better. Cold temperatures crash the DMT out of solution while keeping waxes dissolved. When you pull it out, white to off-white crystals will have crashed out. Working quickly before the jar warms up, pour the naphtha through a coffee filter into another clean jar. The DMT crystals stay in the filter.
The naphtha carrying the waxes can be saved for future extractions.
- 5 Final evaporation.** Scrape the crystals from the coffee filter into your glass baking dish. Spread them out and let them air dry completely in a well-ventilated area. Do not use heat to speed this up — you want every trace of naphtha gone. Full evaporation at room temperature takes 2 to 4 hours. The finished product should be dry to the touch with no chemical smell.
If you can still smell naphtha, it is not done.

Testing Your Extract

Ehrlich, Mecke, and a fentanyl strip

You made this yourself from a known source with a documented process. Testing still matters — it confirms the process worked, catches anything unexpected, and is just good practice. Three tests, five minutes.

EHRlich REAGENT — PRIMARY CONFIRMATION

Place a few crystals of your extract — around 5mg — on a white ceramic surface or test card. Add one drop of Ehrlich reagent. Watch for 3 to 5 minutes. A purple to violet color change is positive for indole alkaloids. DMT is an indole. No color change means something went wrong with the extraction or the source material.

MECKE REAGENT — SECONDARY CONFIRMATION

Same process — small amount of extract, one drop of Mecke reagent, watch for 3 to 5 minutes. A blue to blue-green color change is consistent with DMT. Mecke alone is not definitive but the two reagents together from a known extraction process with known starting material is strong confirmation.

FENTANYL TEST STRIP — STANDARD PRACTICE

This will almost certainly be negative for a home extraction. Run it anyway. It takes 30 seconds and is the harm reduction standard for anything you are going to inhale. Dissolve a small amount of extract in water, dip the strip, read at 2 to 5 minutes. One line is positive for fentanyl. Two lines is negative. Make this a habit regardless of source or process.

WHAT YOUR FINISHED PRODUCT SHOULD LOOK LIKE

Clean freebase DMT from MHRB runs yellow to off-white. Bright white is very clean. Yellow to light orange is normal — residual plant pigments, not a problem. Dark orange, brown, or waxy texture means waxes made it through freeze precipitation — run it again. It should be dry, slightly crystalline, with a faint smell that dissipates quickly.

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Vaporizing Your Extract

Devices, technique, the inhale, what not to do

DMT freebase vaporizes at around 160°C (320°F). That's hot enough to require a dedicated device — a lighter alone doesn't get there reliably, and combustion destroys the compound and your lungs. The technique matters as much as the dose. A lot of difficult or incomplete experiences come down to poor vaporization, not dosage issues.

DEVICE OPTIONS

Yocan Evolve Plus XL	Quartz coil concentrate vaporizer. Most common entry point. Inexpensive (~\$30), widely available, works reliably with freebase DMT. Load the coil, cap it, slow draw.
Dynavap VapCap	Butane-heated titanium tip. Precise temperature control when used correctly. Learning curve but durable and portable. Heat the tip to the click, then draw slowly.
GVG (Glass Vapor Genie)	Pipe-style device with a ceramic filter element. No electricity, no coils. Butane torch heats the bowl indirectly through the filter. Consistent and easy to load.
Pyrex/quartz pipe ("machine")	The traditional method. Small glass pipe, torch heated externally while rotating. Works but requires more technique to avoid combustion. Lowest cost.
E-mesh / Volcano bag	High-end options. E-mesh devices (like the Flowerpot) give precise temp control and full vaporization in one breath. Volcano works well with the official liquid pad accessory (stainless steel mesh insert) — place the material on the pad, run at max temp, fill the bag fast, and inhale immediately. DMT can oxidize sitting in a bag so don't let it linger. Not necessary to start but effective.

LOADING YOUR DEVICE

Weigh your dose before loading — your jeweler's scale, not eyeballing. For coil-style devices, place the material directly on the coil. For pipe-style devices, load onto the mesh or into the bowl. Make sure nothing is loose that could fall and cause a burn on onset.

The device goes down before you inhale the second hit. At 20–30 seconds in you will not be placing anything safely. Set it on a flat surface within arm's reach before you start, positioned so it won't tip.

THE INHALE

This is where most people go wrong. The instinct is to hit it like a bong — fast and hard. That's the opposite of what works. DMT vapor is dense and needs a slow, steady draw to vaporize fully without burning off before it reaches your lungs.

The technique: Activate your device (press the button, apply heat) and begin a slow, controlled draw — think of sipping through a straw, not pulling through a carburetor. Hold the vapor for 10–15 seconds if you can. Exhale slowly. Repeat for a second hit if you haven't reached your intended dose.

For coil devices: Hold the button for 2–3 seconds before drawing. This preheats the coil so the material vaporizes on contact rather than melting and pooling.

For butane devices: Heat until just before the click (Dynavap) or until the bowl glows faintly (pipe). Too hot = combustion and a harsh, incomplete experience. Too cool = material liquefies but doesn't vaporize.

WHAT INCOMPLETE VAPORIZATION FEELS LIKE

If the effects plateau well below your expected dose level, or you taste burning and get a harsh hit with heavy coughing and minimal effects, the material combusted or didn't fully vaporize. This isn't dangerous — it's just wasteful. Lower your heat source, slow your draw, and try again with a fresh load after a 20-minute reset.

BEFORE YOU START

Be horizontal or in a position you can sink into safely. Music or silence decided in advance — you will not be adjusting anything after the first hit. Water within arm's reach. Sitter present for your first session. Nothing in your hands except the device, and that goes down after the second hit.

Dosing Guide

The steepest dose-response curve in psychedelics

DMT has the steepest dose-response curve of any psychedelic. The difference between 15mg and 40mg is not a matter of degree — it is a different category of experience. Start low. There is no version of this where starting high makes sense.

These ranges are for vaporized freebase DMT only. Oral DMT without an MAOI is inactive — digestive enzymes break it down before it reaches the bloodstream. Do not attempt oral dosing with this guide.

LEVEL	RANGE	DURATION	WHAT HAPPENS
Threshold	5-10mg	5-10 min	Mild visual disturbance, body sensation, slight perception shift. You remain fully present. Good calibration point for a first session.
Light	10-20mg	10-20 min	Clear psychedelic effects, visuals, altered time perception. You stay in the room. Start here for your first real session.
Medium	20-35mg	15-25 min	Strong experience. The room may start to dissolve. Geometric visuals become complex. Time distortion is significant.
Breakthrough	40mg+	15-30 min	The room is gone. Complete departure from ordinary reality. Not a starting point — get here through the lower ranges first.

Your 0.1g kitchen scale reads to 100mg — not precise enough for DMT. A jeweler's scale accurate to 0.01g reads to 10mg and is what you actually need. Available online for under \$20. Don't eyeball this compound.

The Experience

Fifteen minutes on paper. Something else in practice.

ONSET — 0 TO 60 SECONDS

Faster than anything you have experienced with other psychedelics. Within one or two inhalations you will feel a rushing physical sensation — some describe pressure, some vibration, some acceleration. Visuals begin immediately. Geometric patterns overlay everything. Colors intensify beyond what seems physically possible.

This is where first-timers sometimes fight it. The speed is disorienting and the instinct is to resist. Resistance makes it harder. The single most useful thing you can do in this window is exhale completely, set the device down safely, and lie back. You have about 30 seconds before full onset. Use them to get horizontal and let go.

PEAK — 1 TO 10 MINUTES

At light to medium doses you are present in a heavily altered version of your environment. Geometry is everywhere. Time has either stopped or become meaningless. The experience has a quality most people struggle to describe accurately — not dreamlike, not like other psychedelics, something with its own internal logic that does not map onto ordinary language well. Don't try to analyze it while it is happening.

At breakthrough doses the environment is gone. What replaces it is individual — some people encounter geometric architecture of impossible complexity, some encounter what feel like presences, some experience something that resists description entirely.

RETURN — 10 TO 20 MINUTES

The geometry begins to resolve. Your room comes back. There is often a strong sense of returning from somewhere rather than simply coming down. An emotional component is common — profound, shaken, or both at once. All of that is normal. By 20 to 30 minutes you are functionally baseline. Residual effects can last another hour. That afterglow window is valuable. Don't fill it with your phone.

WHAT TO HAVE READY

A sitter if this is your first time. A comfortable place to lie down. Water nearby. Nothing scheduled for the next two hours minimum. Music or silence decided before you start. Your device set down before onset, not after.

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Harm Reduction

Contraindications, interactions, and the sitter protocol

HARD STOPS — DO NOT COMBINE WITH THESE

MAOIs are an absolute contraindication. Monoamine oxidase inhibitors — including prescription antidepressants like phenelzine, tranylcypromine, and selegiline, as well as Syrian rue and other natural MAOIs — dramatically potentiate DMT and can produce a dangerous serotonergic reaction. This is not a caution to weigh. If you take an MAOI, this guide is not for you without a conversation with a physician first.

Lithium. Lithium has been associated with seizures in combination with psychedelics. Hard stop.

INTERACTIONS WORTH KNOWING

SSRIs and SNRIs blunt the experience significantly and carry a theoretical serotonin syndrome risk at high doses, though documented cases are rare with smoked DMT given the short duration. Stimulants increase cardiovascular load — not a hard contraindication but worth flagging if you have any cardiac history.

THE SITTER PROTOCOL

A sitter's job is simple: stay sober, stay present, don't intervene unless something is physically wrong. No redirecting the experience, no talking someone through it. If someone drops the device, pick it up. If someone seems like they might fall, steady them. Otherwise sit quietly and let it run. The experience is 15 minutes. It does not need management. Brief your sitter before you start — they should know the dose, expected duration, and what normal looks like versus something that needs attention.

DEVICE SAFETY

Whatever you are vaporizing from, it goes down before onset. At 30 seconds in you will not be holding anything securely. This is how burns happen. Device down, you horizontal, before full onset. Non-negotiable.

LEGAL REALITY

DMT is Schedule I in the United States. Mimosa hostilis root bark is legal to purchase and possess as a plant product. The extraction process and the finished product are not. Know your environment and your risk tolerance. This guide exists because you have a right to accurate information regardless of legal status.

Use the interaction checker. psychedelicsathome.com/tools/interactions — enter your current medications before you proceed. MAOIs are the critical pair to know but you want a full picture.

IF YOU NEED SUPPORT

Fireside Project	Free peer support during or after a psychedelic experience. Call or text 62-FIRESIDE (623-473-7433). Available 24/7. Nonjudgmental.
SAMHSA Helpline	1-800-662-4357. Free, confidential treatment referrals and information. 24/7.
Crisis Line	988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988. 24/7.

Integration

The experience is 15 minutes. What you do with it can take longer.

DMT experiences tend to be vivid and immediate in a way that doesn't fade the way dreams do. Most people remember them clearly. That clarity is an asset if you use it.

SAME DAY

Don't schedule anything after. Give yourself the full afternoon or evening. The afterglow period — that first hour after return — is often when the most useful reflection happens. Write, draw, sit quietly, talk with your sitter if you have one. Get it out of your head and somewhere external while it's fresh. Eat something when you feel ready. Ground yourself physically — a walk, a shower, food. The contrast between where you just were and ordinary physical reality can feel significant. Lean into the ordinary.

FIRST FEW DAYS

DMT experiences often keep giving. Something you saw or felt that didn't make sense immediately may resolve into something meaningful 48 hours later. Keep a note somewhere. Don't force meaning but don't dismiss what surfaces either.

IF IT WAS DIFFICULT

Not every experience is positive. A difficult DMT experience can be genuinely disorienting in a way that lingers. That is not a sign something went wrong — intensity and difficulty are not the same as harm. If you are struggling to integrate something difficult, the Fireside Project peer support line (62-FIRESIDE) is specifically built for psychedelic support and is free.

THE LONGER ARC

DMT tends to raise questions more than it answers them. What you do with those questions — whether that is continued exploration, a change in perspective, or simply filing it away as one of the more unusual things you have experienced — is entirely yours. There is no correct response.

Psychedelics at Home is a free harm reduction resource. No ads, no agenda, no gatekeeping. If this guide was useful, share it with someone who needs it.

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