

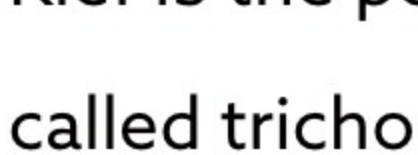


Education

4 Ways to Use Your Kief

A guide to getting the most out of your green gold.

By **Lauren Wilson** • Aug 28, 2018



Kief is the powdery substance you get from collecting cannabis crystals. These "crystals" are called trichomes—they're mushroom-shaped glands that grow on the surface of the cannabis plant (most heavily on the leaves and flowers), and it's within these glands that the cannabinoids like **THC** and **CBD**, **terpenes**, flavonoids and other goodies are stored. Trichomes are why you want your flower have a frosty white coating, prized in strains like **White Widow**, for example.

Ideally, kief will contain only the very tops of trichomes (the "heads"), since they contain the highest concentration of cannabinoids—this produces the highest quality kief. But unless you're trying to make really high-quality hash, getting the trichome stems along with the heads isn't a big deal and most people don't bother with the extra filtration needed to remove the stems and other plant matter.



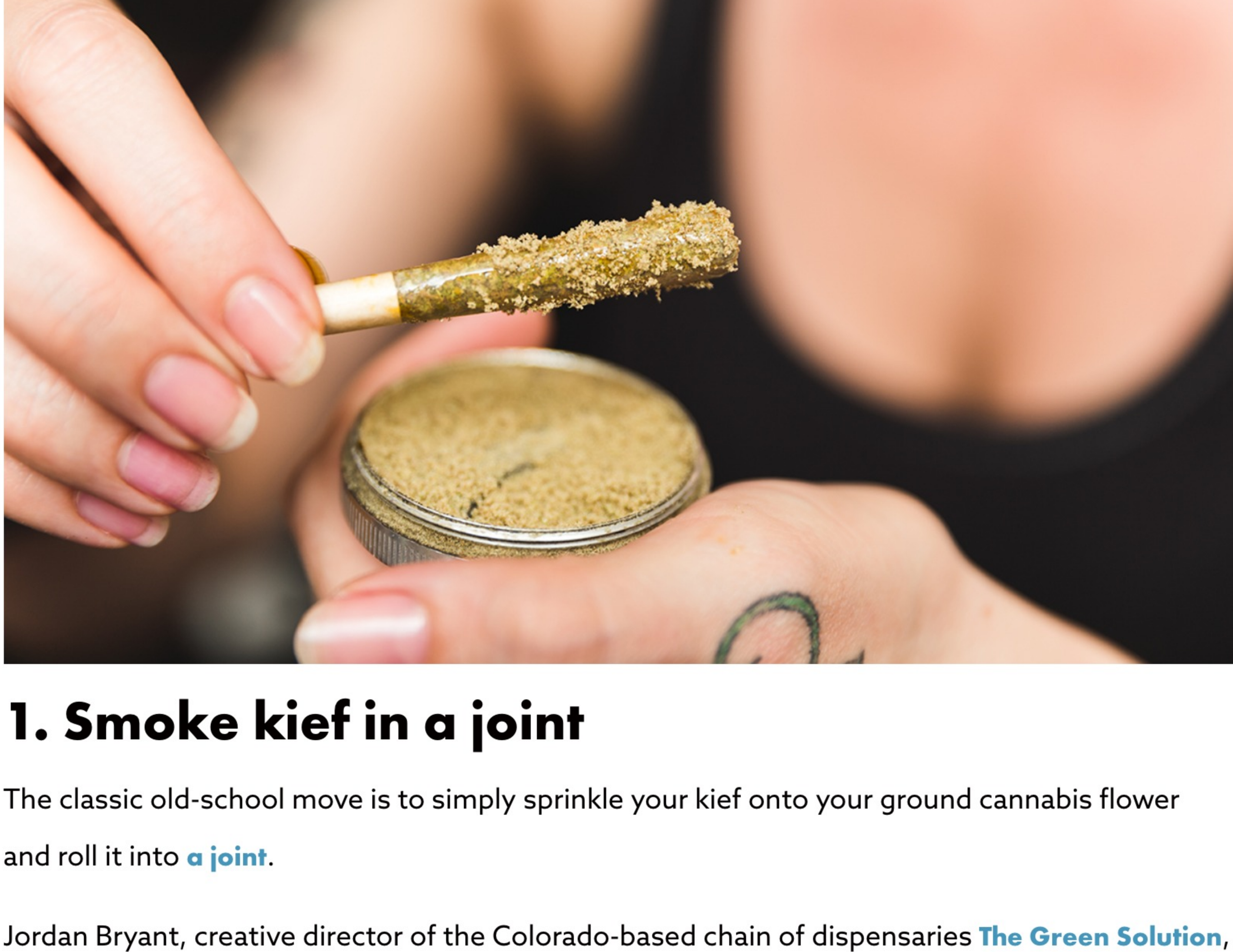
WeedMD/Photographer: Dan Lee

So how do you collect kief? The easiest way is to get a four-piece **cannabis grinder** that has a screen for sifting, and a dedicated chamber for collecting the trichomes that fall off your flower while grinding. This is how most enthusiasts do it—kief becomes a byproduct of your regular flower grinding and consumption.

Kief is a very fine substance, and trichomes are tiny, so it might take a while to collect enough to properly consume. Depending on how much you consume and how frosty your cannabis is, you can collect a useable amount of kief in a few days or weeks.

Once you've collected enough kief, it can be used in several different ways.

First off, remember that kief is a highly concentrated substance. Because it's where the plant stores all the **cannabinoids**, it's going to naturally have a much higher cannabinoid content than the flower as a whole. If you're new to using kief, start low and go slow. Be aware that pairing kief with dried cannabis or other concentrates like hash oil, as outlined below, will create an even more potent final product. The last thing you want is to **over do it**, so consume responsibly.



1. Smoke kief in a joint

The classic old-school move is to simply sprinkle your kief onto your ground cannabis flower and roll it into **a joint**.

Jordan Bryant, creative director of the Colorado-based chain of dispensaries **The Green Solution**, says a layered version of a kief-laced joint is called a sugar cone.

"Roll up a joint, coat the outside of the joint in hash oil, try not to get too close to the side you will put your mouth on," he explains. "Once the oil is on the joint, sprinkle kief all over the oil until it is fully covered."



2. Smoke kief in a bowl

Another popular method is to sprinkle kief on top of a packed bowl in your **pipe** or **bong**, which is called "crowning your bowl." But why stop there when you can create multiple layers of kief and flower?

"My favourite is a roast kief sandwich," says **Michael Zaytsev**, founder of the cannabis education and advocacy group **High NY**. "Pack the bottom of a bowl with some ground flower, sprinkle a layer of kief on top, and then add another layer of flower topped with another layer of kief.

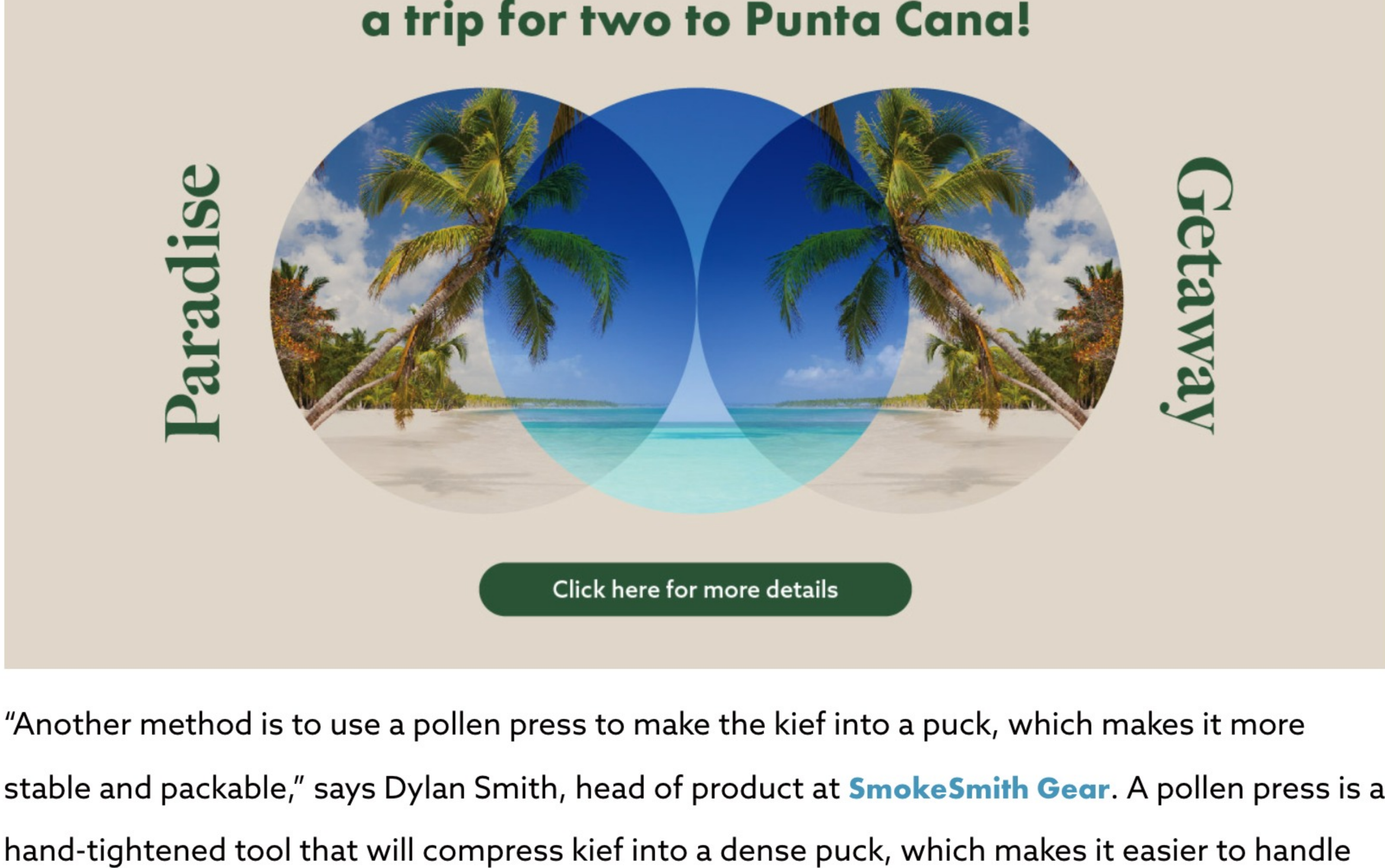
Repeat this process until your bowl is full."



3. Vaporize kief

Using a **dry-herb vaporizer** is one of the most efficient ways to consume kief. It's key to layer it with some ground, dry cannabis because most vaporizers aren't equipped to handle kief alone.

High quality vaporizers have settings low enough to allow the cannabinoids and terpenes to be vaporized at **their ideal temperatures**, avoiding a lot of the loss that occurs with the high temperatures of smoking.



"Another method is to use a pollen press to make the kief into a puck, which makes it more stable and packable," says Dylan Smith, head of product at **SmokeSmith Gear**. A pollen press is a hand-tightened tool that will compress kief into a dense puck, which makes it easier to handle and extends the shelf life. You can crumble off small pieces from the puck and add them to your vaporizer with some dry herb.

If you're using cannabis for medical purposes, vaporizing will be the healthiest method, too.



4. Use kief in edibles

You can also use kief in **edibles**, **though be sure to decarboxylate it first**. According to **Jessica Catalano**, cannabis chef and author of *The Ganja Kitchen Revolution: The Bible of Cannabis Cuisine*, you should decarb the kief for 25 minutes at 220F before using it in food.

"Kief can be added to just about anything. One of my favorite ways is decarbing it and adding it to homemade spice mixtures, think a spicy Mrs. Dash," Catalano recommends.

And remember that kief will be more potent than using flower. The potency of kief can **vary anywhere from 20-60%**. If you're collecting kief from your grinder and want to use it in edibles, conservatively estimate the potency to be around 40% for calculating dosage per serving.

Because the body metabolizes THC differently when **eating versus smoking cannabis**, be sure to follow the old adage: start low and go slow! It's easy to over-consume cannabis with edibles, so consume responsibly.