

HOW TO BREAK IN A BASEBALL GLOVE

There are many different methods for breaking in a baseball glove, and each method has its supporters and detractors. If you asked a dozen different baseball players how they break in their baseball glove, you will likely get a dozen different answers! We suggest checking with the manufacturer of your baseball glove to see what they suggest, as gloves made from different types or grades of leather may have different requirements.

The two basic goals of breaking in a baseball glove are to first soften the leather and then to create a pocket in the glove. No matter what you do, most will agree that the most effective way to break in a baseball glove is by using it!

Softening the Leather: There are a number of different oils and lotions that can be used to soften the leather on your baseball glove.

- Foam Shaving Cream
- Vaseline
- Saddle Soap
- Manufacturer's Solutions - Most of the major glove makers offer their own oils.
- Mink Oil or Neatsfoot Oil
- Tanners Glove Oil
- "Hot Glove" Treatment. This treatment consists of putting a special foam on your glove and then baking it in your oven for 4 minutes. This method is very controversial among baseball glove owners - some swear by it, others call it harmful to the glove.

One of the few things people will generally agree upon when it comes to breaking in a baseball glove, is that in order to soften the leather - **more oil, soap, cream is not better!** Use cream and oil in small amounts and wipe it around your glove, don't slop it on and allow it to soak it - this will make the leather deteriorate faster.

Forming the Pocket: Besides actually playing catch or spending your afternoons throwing a ball into your glove, there are a number of ways to form a pocket in your baseball glove.

- The most popular method for forming the pocket of your baseball glove is to place a baseball (or softball) in the pocket and tie the glove shut with shoelaces, string or even a belt. There are also several products that are designed to hold the baseball glove shut and in the proper position while it is not in use.

Baseball Glove Care

Properly caring for your baseball glove can make a huge difference in the lifespan of your glove. We recommend checking with the manufacturer of your glove to see what they recommend.

- Keep your baseball glove in a cool, dry place when it is not in use. Do not leave your glove where the heat could affect the leather (the trunk of your car).
- If your glove gets wet, dry it with a towel and let it air-dry. Do not put it in the oven or near a heater as it may dry out the leather.
- Do not over oil your baseball glove. A few times each season is plenty.
- Keep the laces tight.

From Nokona: "We do not recommend neatsfoot oil, linseed oil or silicon-type spray as these tend to close the pores of the leather, causing it to dry, harden, and become heavy over an extended period of time and through repeated use. Petroleum jelly keeps the pores open and in effect, keeps the leather "alive" while providing a softening condition. There are other cleaners and conditioners that are safe, especially those scientifically developed for glove leather."

Follow these tips, check with your manufacturer and your baseball glove should treat you well!