

How to Break In a New Leather Glove

Step 1: Condition the Baseball Glove

Conditioning your baseball glove is possibly the most important step of all. Baseball gloves, even youth baseball gloves and custom baseball gloves, are made with leather and other similar materials and will crack and tear during the breaking in process if not conditioned properly. You can soften the leather of your glove by applying glove oil or cream to the surface of the glove.

Most baseball glove manufacturers will sell specific glove oils for their gloves but you don't really need to get the specific brand oil to be successful. Any glove oil will do. Simply apply a coating of glove oil to the entire surface of your baseball glove. You can apply it directly with your bare hands or use an application pad, just keep in mind that a little oil goes a long way.

After you have oiled up your baseball glove sufficiently, making sure to work the oil into all of the nooks and crannies of the outside of the glove and in the mitt, wipe it down with a dry paper towel to remove any excess oil.

You're going to want to repeat this oiling process whenever you feel the glove is getting dry. After breaking in the glove you won't have to go through all of the steps again but it is a good idea to condition your glove once or twice per baseball season.



Step 2: Shaping the Baseball Gloves

To shape your baseball glove you are going to need a few things. You will need two large rubber bands, a shaping ball (a wiffle ball or softball will do), and a covering bag. To shape the baseball glove simply place the shaping ball inside the pocket of the glove and secure it using the rubber bands. You want to close the glove over the ball with the rubber bands, using them to form an X on the back of the glove.

Once you have wrapped the ball in the glove place the glove inside your covering bag and leave it out in room temperature over night so that the oil can be absorbed into the leather.



Step 3: Breaking in the Baseball Glove

You need one of two things to break in the baseball glove. You can either use a rubber or wooden mallet to break in the baseball glove or you can use a baseball. I would recommend using the mallet as it is much easier to strike your baseball glove than it is to throw a baseball into the glove at the same force.

Take the rubber bands off of your baseball glove and remove the shaping ball you used. Put the baseball glove on your hand as if you were going to play a game of catch and take the mallet or baseball in your other hand. Now, simulate a ball striking the inside of your mitt by repeatedly smacking your hand with the mallet. This will create a nice pocket for your glove and loosen up the leather. You want to strike your glove for a good ten minutes. I usually do this while watching the Red Sox play on television.



Step 4: Play Catch with the Baseball Glove

Finally we get to the fun part. You've oiled up your baseball glove, you've shaped it, and you've smacked it with a mallet, now it's time to go outside and play catch. Playing catch with your newly formed baseball glove completes the breaking in process in two ways: You will stretch and contour the leather to your hand as you open and close the glove to catch the ball and the force of the ball as it strikes the back of your mitt will deepen the pocket.

Play catch until you feel like your glove is adequately loose and broken in. Now you can keep playing with the knowledge that you have successfully and properly broken in your brand new baseball glove. If you read this article in hopes of learning how to break in your baseball batting gloves, I'm sorry, that's a whole other story.