How To Break In Your Grips

Always keep in mind that improperly sized dowel grips or wearing a grip not designed for the appropriate apparatus is very dangerous and can lead to catastrophic injury. Always consult your coach when making grip decisions. Never borrow a teammate's grips!

Break-in procedure:
You first need to soften the stiff leather. Start by rolling the leather. Wrap the leather around the dowel and roll the grip down to the cuff. Repeat this step with the dowel facing you and with it facing away from you. You will notice an immediate difference in the softening of the leather. Perform this step several times on each handgrip and include the wrist cuffs as well. Never pinch or fold the leather sharply together. It is now okay to start using your handgrips in slow under swings until the grips feel comfortable enough for more advanced stunts and full giant swings. These grips are now prepared for your use only.

Regarding the finger holes:
The rolling process above should soften them to a comfortable fit. But if they are still too small or tight for your fingers, follow this procedure. Use a small piece of sandpaper (many brands supply it with the grips). Wrap it around a pencil and slowly and carefully sand around the finger holes. This will open the hole consistently around the opening without tears. Never stretch the opening by hooking it on something and pulling and never cut the holes with a knife. This will tear or weaken and damage the leather rendering them unsafe and beyond repair.

More important grip notes:
Never use water to soften leather grips. Water causes deterioration and rotting, as well as stretching of the leather. This can shorten the life of your grips.

Inspect your grips often for tears or over stretching. Grips that become too long are very dangerous and can cause grip lock. If any part of the dowel can touch the lower portion of the grip when the hand is around the bar, the grip is too long. If the grip slips off the fingertips or the dowel slides to the side and if the grip does not stay in the correct position on the wrist, it is too long.

Do’s and Don’ts

...Do read all instructions enclosed with your grips.

...Do check with your gymnastics instructor about correct sizing.

...Do use a piece of sandpaper to lightly sand the lower portion of the finger hole to enlarge the hole if needed.

...Do wash your hands before trying on the grip.

...Don’t cut or pull the finger holes to enlarge, use the sandpaper.

...Don’t write on the grips before checking sizing with your instructor.

...Don’t chalk the grips before checking the size.

...Don’t soak the grips in water. This will cause them to stiffen and wear out more quickly.

All grips returned for exchange or credit must be in new condition and in its original package.

GRIPS WORN, USED, CHALKED, OR RIPPED FINGER HOLES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR EXCHANGE OR CREDIT.

It’s highly recommended that you always have a back-up pair of grips, so don’t lose valuable training time or miss a competition because your grips are torn, lost, or unsafe to use.

Be prepared and make sure your back-up grips are broken in and ready to use in case of emergency.