

Paddle Palace Gluing Tips

When to Change Rubber:

No matter how well you take care of your paddle's rubber, the day will come when you will need to replace it or get a new paddle. Over time, the rubber will crack, chip, tear, dry out and wear down, losing its original characteristics.

How often should you change the rubber? Typically, you'll find that today's high performance rubbers drop in performance after 40 to 60 hours of play. For that reason, most world class players change their rubber every week. However, most average players replace their high performance rubber every six to nine months. Pips-out and anti-spin rubbers routinely last longer; from one to two years.

Replacing rubber or gluing rubber to a new paddle is relatively easy. It does require a few simple tools, and learning some basic techniques.

Tools:

The equipment needed for applying rubber includes a sharp knife, rubber cement, and a brush, sponge, or straight edge.

1. Remove the old rubber

Remove the rubber against the wood grain, at a diagonal or side-to-side, to avoid pulling off bits of wood. If the rubber will not pull off easily, use an eye dropper to put small amounts of acetone between the sponge and the blade surface while peeling the rubber off gently. The acetone dissolves the glue but does not harm the rubber or blade. After you take the rubber off, make sure that the blade is completely clean and smooth. Sand very lightly with 100 grade sand paper if necessary.

2. Apply glue to blade and rubber

Next, apply a thin layer of glue to one side of the blade with a stiff bristled brush. It is important not to use too much glue to avoid clumps that result in an uneven playing surface.

After applying glue to your blade, apply a thin layer to the back side of your rubber sheet. When this is done, let the glue on both the blade and rubber dry completely. This usually takes about five minutes.

3. Apply the Rubber

Carefully line the bottom of the rubber sheet up with the bottom of the hitting surface. Then slowly roll the rubber out to the end, avoiding any air bubbles between the rubber and the blade. To get a good seal between the rubber and the blade, put a piece of plastic or paper over the rubber surface and press down with the heel of your hand, or use a rubber roller.

4. Cut the Rubber

Turn the paddle over so that the rubber you just attached is facing the table on a cutting board. Holding the paddle in place and using the outside of the blade as your guide, cut the excess rubber off with a sharp knife. Always use a very sharp blade to get a smooth cut.

To make cutting the rubber easier, put the blade on the end of your table so that the handle extends off the table. This will keep the paddle flush with the table during cutting. To protect the table's surface, put a cutting board, or piece of cardboard, or the rubber packaging, under the blade while you cut.

Repeat the same steps for the other side of the paddle.

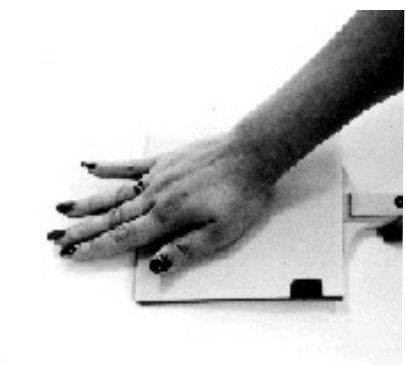
When you have finished, put a piece of edge tape around the outside edge of your paddle to protect the edge and give it a finished look.



Brush the paddle cement evenly onto the blade and rubber.



Attach the rubber. Begin with bottom edge and roll it onto the blade.



Press to get a good seal between rubber and blade.



Trim the excess rubber from the paddle using a sharp knife.