

OARSMAN MARINE TALLOW
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APPLYING TALLOW TO OAR LEATHERS* **

***(Do *not* apply tallow or any other treatment to leathers before they have been installed on the oar looms.)**

*****(The same instructions apply to seasoning any smooth-tanned, full grain leather intended for marine or outdoor use—boots, belts, pack basket and creel straps, gaff jaw leathers, and the like.)***

The purpose of applying tallow to oar leathers is twofold:

1. To preserve the leather by preventing its drying out (which will result in cracking and checking) and to render it water resistant; and
2. To provide lubrication between the leather and the inner (contact) face of the oarlock. (You will also be using it to lubricate the oarlock shaft to reduce wear on the socket.)

The intent is to season the leather (provide it with a protective coating), not saturate it. Apply the tallow conservatively—you can always apply a bit more if need be.

APPLYING THE TALLOW

You've been provided with tallow in a quarter-pint tin plus a smaller tin of of tallow/beeswax mix. Recommended equipment is a clean, dry cloth and a mild heat source (a hair drier works well). If it's a nice clear day and you're not in a rush, old-fashioned sunlight is an ecofriendly alternative. Leather takes up tallow more effectively if it's been warmed, but don't get the leather get hot—excessive heat damages leather.

1. Warm the leather. Using the cloth, apply a thin even coat of tallow over the entire surface of the leather and rub it in. Allow it to set up 15 or 20 minutes. Warm the leather again and apply a second coat.

2. After the second coat has set up, open the smaller tin, warm the leather, and rub an even coat (a bit more thickly than the first two coats) over the entire surface of the leather and buff in with the cloth. (Recap the tin. Unless you have other oars ready, you won't need the tallow/beeswax mixture until Winter lay-up.)

Always take your tallow with you when rowing. Just before casting off, put a dab on a fingertip and apply a thin layer to the area of the leathers that will be in contact with the oarlocks. This provides lubrication between the leathers and the inner face of the oarlocks. Also, apply a coating to the oarlock shafts—this reduces wear on the sockets.

If you're going out for a leisurely row of an hour or two, one application of tallow to leathers and sockets is enough. If you're out to make a day of it, you may want to replenish both leathers and sockets once or twice.

Before getting under way, **be sure** to recap the tallow and stow it away from sunlight. When the air temperature is already warm, tallow liquefies quickly when exposed to direct sunlight.

When laying up for the Winter, be sure to give the leathers a coat of tallow from the larger tin and follow up with a coat of tallow/beeswax mix. (For other leather items, use observation and common sense in deciding when to replenish.)

That's about it. Enjoy.

For our full range of products (including *Oarsman's Friend Hand Salve*—a favorite of rowers) visit Swanson Boat Company's website @ www.oarsmanmarinetallow.com

All the best, Rodger