

How to Care for Your Drum

Because of the way the rawhide is made, it is not necessary to apply any oils to the drumhead. Quite often, a drum does need to be retightened during its life. If a drum gets loose or does not stay tight in average temperature and humidity, it is probably time for a retightening.

There are a couple of ways to do this. The main idea is to resaturate the hide and then dry it. What this does is allow the rawhide to loosen up completely, and when you dry it again, it can slip just a little where it needs to.

The easiest way we have found to resaturate the rawhide is to wait for a rainy day (a cloudy, drizzly day is best), lay the drum flat on one side for a while, and flip it over every hour or so, depending on how hard it is raining. Like I said, the idea is to get it well saturated. A drum with fairly thick hides can take a while: 8 to 10 hours or even longer.

This will not hurt our painted drums, but you do have to be a little more careful not to scratch or rub the painting too much while the rawhide is wet. Also, try not to let the drum get a puddle of water on just one side because this will let more water go inside the drum, making it harder to dry.

After you think the drum is good and resaturated, take it into one of your warmer rooms and redry it using a small fan. You want it to dry fairly quickly, but you do not want to use extreme heat: 70 to 80 degrees is good. It should be completely redried in one to two days.

After you have done this to your drum once or twice over a period of time, you will find it will stay tight, even in fairly cool and humid conditions.