

So, you have a new set of OBO Robo or Robo SP Kickers and don't know how to "condition" them? Read on and follow the directions religiously and they won't split or be uncomfortable.

Don't new gear look great? Here they are, out of the packet, and all ready to be shaped. Remember that piece of paper that they came with? It also tells you how to do this but isn't quite as definite about it as me. They don't care if your kickers don't last as long as they can. They just want you to be happy and buy more of their products. If you do not follow the instructions that are packaged with the kickers it is entirely possible that any warranty claim may not be honoured. Seems kinda important now don't it? Maybe you shouldn't oughta throw the instructions out quite so quick after all!

FIG 1.



Both the Hi-Rebound and the Hi-Control versions of the Robo kickers have the unfortunate habit of splitting along the toe strap holes on what becomes the underside of the kicker. Similarly the tongue that stops the pads from turning on your legs can rub your shins raw very quickly if the kickers are not "conditioned" before use and stored properly when not in use. Follow the advice about how to avoid these problems and save yourself some hard earned bucks and some tears.

Get a hair dryer and heat the “tongue” (the black bit in these photos) on the inside only as shown in FIG 2. Heat the full area of the tongue for at least 5 minutes DON'T USE A NAKED FLAME! Naked flame will cause the foam to split and your hard earned money is wasted. We should be learning right about now that the foam is heat sensitive. That is, when it is hot it is easy(er) to shape, Softer and more prone to tear. But when it cools down again it retains the shape you imposed on it when hot. This little snippet of info is what we will use to condition the kickers.

FIG 2.



I might add that five minutes is a long time, turn on the radio and listen to at least two tracks..... Then again, turn on the TV and watch one load of ads. It's about the same time but don't watch TV between the ad breaks and think that that is about five minutes because it's only about three. Read these instructions a couple of times, by the time they start to make sense it should be about an hour!!

When you have heated the whole inside surface of the tongue (as shown) for at least 5 minutes fasten the rear ankle strap (the one that goes around your ankle) as tight as you can. NO, NOT THAT TIGHT, TIGHTER. Look at FIG 3 to get an idea of how tight

FIG 3.



Once you have the ankle strap as tight as you can get it and the tongue pulled forward towards the toe of the kicker you can use the rearmost toe strap to hold the tongue forwards instead of tape (as OBO suggests) it is very easy to use tape that is too sticky and damage the kicker when you remove the tape. Bit of a bummer to damage new kickers before you even wear them!

Before you started I should have suggested that you get two wide belts or bandages that you can use (Oops, Sorry). Put these belts around the kickers, hold the tongue towards the toe and the sides of the kicker together as shown in FIG 4 Looks great doesn't it?

FIG 4



Let the kicker cool before you do up the toe straps. Every time you store the kickers for the first month use the bandage/straps to hold the sides together and take all of the stress off of the toe straps. Every time you store the kickers for the rest of their lives do up the ankle strap. Never, ever, store your gear in a place where the temperature is likely to rise above about 35° C (Like in a gear bag in the boot of your car, or worse yet, on the back seat on a hot day) Please remember that you most probably paid more for this gear than your parents paid for you, and you wouldn't be happy if your parents left you in a hot car either.

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