

The DawnSong

With our compliments

PurpleMartinProducts.com, TroyerGourds.com, SuperGourd.com

How To Maintain Plastic Gourds

Troyer Gourd and SuperGourd Maintenance

Lets face it, we make an investment with our plastic gourds. I don't care which manufactured gourd you purchase, its an investment. And like all investments we need to care for them. But how do you do that?

First and foremost, the martins nest with us for 6 months or less. The best thing you can do is to remove the gourds from your gourd arms and store them during the off season. By storing them in their original boxes, or in your outdoor shed is best.

At the end of the season you should clean the gourds using a mild cleaner, like 409 all purpose cleaner. Some landlords like to use a diluted bleach solution. Begin by removing all the old and dirty nesting material. Using a hose spray water inside the gourd and insert your plastic gloved hand inside the access port and scrub it out. It does not need to be immaculate. Don't forget to clean the exterior grit of the gourd. If you have stubborn stains I have found the "Mr. Clean Magic Erasers" do wonders. Be sure to thoroughly rinse the gourd off.

Troyer Horizontal Gourd owners. When cleaning your gourd out remember to clean under the tread as well as the top of the tread. Older Troyer Horizontal Gourds use rubber or other material type mats. If your gourd uses an older tread, inspect them carefully. If your older traction tread has torn, it is time to replace them. A tread that is not properly attached or slightly tom, can break mid season, and it will be really hard to replace the tread with a martin using the gourd. We have replacement [traction treads](#) and a simple how to install them [here](#). I would also highly recommend that you pick up a package of [Push-in-Pins](#) to make repairs to treads as well as replacing the pins that hold the tunnel onto the gourd. Push-in pins are included when you purchase replacement treads, but one very hot summer I had a pin deteriorate on a tunnel and I was glad to have a replacement pin handy.

Troyer Vertical Gourd owners check your traction tread that is found in the tunnel area. When cleaning your gourd don't forget to clean that tread too (I use an old toothbrush to remove the poo).

Once you have cleaned the gourds I like to put them back on the rack for a few days to get nice and dry.

One thing I do after my gourds have completely dried is to spray them with liquid seven. This is my last defense to kill any mites that may be hiding in the gourd. I spray them heavily especially around the caps and the hanging holes. I would let the Sevin dry overnight before putting away your gourds.

It's now time to inspect your gourd for wear and tear.

[Porches on SuperGourds](#), it is recommended that you caulk the joint between the porch and the gourd. Check your caulk and make sure it is still solid. If not remove the the old caulk and place a new bead of it. The porches on the Troyer Tunnel needs no caulk, just wash them.

Next we may want to check the nuts and bolts that hold the porches on to the SuperGourds. Are they still nice and tight? If not, tighten them. If storing your gourds in a box you may want to remove the outer porch. I'd leave the inner porch on with the hardware holding the porch on, then come spring you need only attach the outer porch back on.

I have Troyer Horizontal Gourds that I purchased from Andrew Troyer's very first run. The bodies of these gourds look as good as the day I purchased them, with only minimal wear on the occasional hanging hole. If your THG is showing signs of wear at the hanging hole please consider the [Gourd-Life Enhancement Kit](#). The whole purpose of these kits is to strengthen the hanging hole and as an added bonus, they make your THG water-tight.

As I mentioned earlier I have THG's from the very first run. The THG has undergone some upgrades, most notable the traction tread and the heavy-duty access cap. I have upgraded all my gourd caps, and I do upgrade the treads as needed. To purchase the the caps for the [Troyer Gourds click here](#). The SuperGourd also improved its caps to a heavy-duty cap you [can find them here](#).

One last item about gourds, add [elbow vents](#), especially important for southern landlords. Keep the vent plugged with a cotton ball till the babies are at least one week old, then open the vent(s).

Not everyone can store their gourds during the off-season. If you cant, block the entrance so unwanted sparrows or squirrels can't use your gourds. For SuperGourds purchase a pool noodle from your local dollar store and cut it into 1-inch pieces. You can stuff the one-inch noodle into the entrance hole. You can do the same thing with your Troyer Tunnel Gourds or you can purchase the plastic [door shields](#). In a

pinch you can even use the Tunnel Traps Shutter Door.

With martins returning to the southern United States if you haven't inspected your gourds, do so before you hang them back up. Don't forget to place a few handfuls of [pine needles](#) into the gourds so that when your martins do return, they have a nice dry bed to rest in.

The Forgotten Yet Most Wonderful K-Series Gourd Rack

The first gourd rack designed and developed by my husband Robert was the Deluxe Gourd Rack. Originally offered using a round pole, it progressed to using a square pole.

One feature of the Deluxe Gourd Rack is the circular tiers of gourds. Just like the Gemini, having gourds at a slightly different angle, aids the martins against male dominance.

The K-Series is a Deluxe on steroids. Everything about this gourd rack is bigger than its little brother.

It features a three-inch square pole that stands 16-foot tall. It includes a heavy-duty high-strength aluminum ground stake as well as two 72-inch long solid aluminum top perch rods.

The horizontal gourd arms, all 18 or 24 of them, are made using stainless steel. Not using Troyer gourds? Simply drill your gourds hanging hole front-to-back in the gourds neck. New SuperGourds even have drilling-guide dimples in the neck of the gourd.

The all aluminum hub has glide buttons for smooth movement and is shipped to you assembled. The gourd rack raises and lowers via a brake winch which is included, you can even upgrade to the Worm Gear Winch if you so desire.

The K-Series also includes stainless steel cable, the upper pulley, aluminum winch brackets, and a cable guide. Like its little brother it is one of the easiest gourd racks to assemble.

The K-Series is offered in two configurations:

[K-Series 18](#)

[K-Series 24](#)

It is also one of the easiest to do nest checks, you can remove the entire gourd arm from the hub, or pull the supplied stainless hitch from the gourd arm and remove the gourd.

Everything about this gourd rack makes it a top pick with superior features. Now manufactured by the Troyers. Five-star quality!



2019 Calendar On Sale!

Showing our love for the Purple Martins, and while there is still plenty of time to enjoy the calendar, for the entire month of February, and while supplies last, get your 2019 Purple Martin Calendar for **\$5.95 with FREE SHIPPING!**

Filled with beautiful martin photos and the calendar includes Andrew Troyer's Purple Martin Landlords 10 Commandments as well as a Peek into the Purple Martin Life-cycle.

Any quantity, no other purchase necessary.

[2019 Purple Martin Calendar](#)

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