

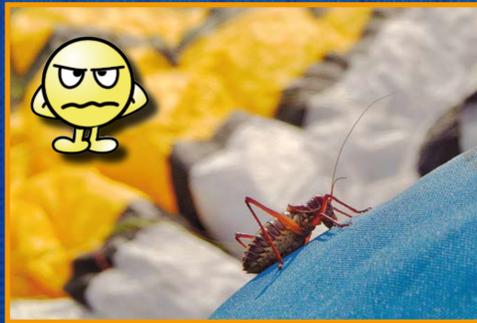
Look after the fabric of your glider

A modern paraglider is an incredibly high performance aircraft for its size and weight. This little miracle is possible thanks to the current fabrics. These high tech fabrics are the biggest part of a glider: a 27 sqm canopy is made of approximately 90 sqm of fabric... This sophisticated, high performance material needs care: if you take some precautions when handling your canopy, you will significantly increase the life expectancy of your glider...



Fold your glider carefully

After flying, fold your canopy neatly. Above all, line the reinforcements of the leading edge up: stacking them one against the other. You will avoid permanent creases in the stiffeners which will affect the aerodynamic performance of the leading edge.



Don't let insects get trapped in your canopy

Insects trapped in the canopy when you pack it away will try and gnaw their way out – making holes in the process. In addition, insect secretions will stain the fabric. It's easy to avoid: get rid of them before folding your canopy. Besides, contrary to popular opinion, insects do not prefer particular colours.



Don't step on the canopy

Walking or standing on the canopy weakens the fabric, especially if the ground underneath is hard and stony. As owner of the canopy, it might seem obvious to you, but don't forget spectators on take-off areas, especially children. Don't hesitate to point out to them the frailty of the fabric.



No detergents, solvents or abrasives

Don't ever clean your canopy with solvents or abrasives. Solvents like White Spirit attack both the coating and the fibres of the fabric. The canopy will become porous and lose tear strength.



Cleaning with water and mild soap

If a stain on the fabric of your canopy really bothers you, you can try to gently remove it with soft water, a non abrasive sponge and a very mild soap like «Savon de Marseille». In this case, thoroughly rinse the washed part and dry it in an airy and shadowed place.



Don't put your canopy in the washing machine

Above all, never put your canopy in a washing machine: even without detergent, the fabric will be seriously damaged by the mechanical action. Don't plunge your canopy into a pool: the chlorine will attack the fabric. If you must rinse your glider, after a sea landing in salt water for example, clean it with a garden hose. However, repeated rinsing accelerates aging.



Never store your glider near chemicals

Never store your glider near chemical substances like fuel. Petrol drops, for example, dissolve the fabric and can thus badly damage your canopy. In your car boot, put your glider bag as far away as you can from a petrol can or oil drum.



Don't squash your glider excessively

Although your new canopy is delivered very tightly packed, avoid squashing it too hard when you put it away after use. Even if it is tempting – while waiting for favourable conditions to take-off, avoid, as far as possible, sitting on your bag.



Don't drag the fabric over the ground

As a rule, when assembling a glider, the manufacturers put the coated side of the fabric facing inside the wing section. This protects the coating, which is sensitive to mechanical abrasion. Nevertheless, avoid dragging the canopy over the ground, especially in stony areas or where there are thorn bushes.



Never fly a wet canopy

When your canopy is soaked, after a sea landing for example, it's imperative that you don't fly until it is entirely dry. The stresses the glider is under whilst flying might cause the wet fabric to lose its shape and make the glider unairworthy. If you get caught in the rain: avoid sudden manoeuvres which load the glider. Don't fly slowly (risk of stall) and land as soon as possible.



Don't leave a wet glider in the bag

Sometimes, you have to pack your canopy away humid or even wet. When you get home, take it out of the bag and dry it in a clean and airy place. If you don't have the space, place your canopy in a "mushroom" shape and periodically change the bits exposed to the air. If you don't do this there's a risk of mould growth and the glider fabric will degenerate very quickly. The worst atmosphere is humidity combined with heat!



Let it breathe

Even if your glider was completely dry after the last flight of the season, it needs air! For winter storage, we advise you to open the bag and to store it in an airy, fresh, shadowed and above all dry place. If you have enough room, take the canopy out of its bag and leave it "mushroomed". Make sure it doesn't pose a risk to household pets, and is not accessible to vermin.



Avoid heat

The fabric of the glider is sensitive to excessive heat. Especially when it is combined with humidity, heat speeds the hydrolysis process up: both fibres and coating suffer. Never leave the glider bag in the boot or interior of a car parked in the sun. Do not store your glider near a radiator or any other heating appliance. Remember: heat combined with humidity can cause serious degradation of the fabric.



Don't "suntan" your glider

Although modern fabrics are now more resistant to sunlight, especially UV, light is still an important aging factor. First victim: colours. Then the fibres and the coating deteriorate.



Avoid repeatedly overloading your glider

Your glider is capable of withstanding the loads it's subjected to in manoeuvres like spiral dives. Even more extreme acrobatic manoeuvres like the SAT or tumbling don't constitute a risk to the structure of a EN or LTF certified glider. However, repeated overloading speeds up the aging process – acro pilots have to regularly change their gliders.



Use the professionals

For the safety checks on your canopy or a second-hand glider, use a professional workshop. Without adequate tools, it is very difficult to assess the aging of a canopy. Fading, for example, might not affect the mechanical properties of a modern fabric. In most cases, even if the colours have faded, porosity and strength values remain within required specifications.

Porcher Sport – the raw material of your passion

A dominant player in aviation and nautical sports industries, Porcher Sport develops and produces high tech fabrics for paragliders, parachutes, hang gliders, microlights, all types of kites, hot air balloons and more. You will find further information on our **SKYTEX** fabrics for paragliding, their manufacturing process as well as practical advice on our website:

www.porcher-sport.com

Enjoy your flights!

Porcher **SPORT**
The Weav'air