

## Gear Review – Gear Aid Freesole Shoe & Boot Repair Glue



Wanting to keep some old sandals and shoes running a bit longer, I have been trying some glues the last couple of years, with limited success. I have tried using Marine Goop (like Acquaseal) and Kwik Grip sole glue, but these haven't taken. With the closing down sale at Mountain Designs, I tried the Field Repair brand, having bought some of their clips before. It is also stocked other stores like Paddy Pallin, and although I haven't given the repair a workout yet, the initial results were good enough for me to buy a second tube, at about \$17 each. I think I have started repairing my sailing sandals, but only took photos of my Tevas.

First thing to note is Gear Aid do two shoe glues, this is a thicker one you can actually mould shapes with to rebuild a toe etc. You'll see in the photos below it did hold its bulk, unlike other glues, and should be good for the repair of the chunks I took out of the Garmont boots from hiking to Lake Ada in Tasmania a few years back (damage shown below also). But, my Tevas have been on the workbench for almost 2 years, with the soles almost fully gone and a big crack across the ball of the tread. I bought a replacement pair last spring, but the glue on those went in a month and I'm still waiting their return, so I gave them a go. My only prep was a wire brush on the old glue (and dirt).

The curing is a bit faster than other glues, but I still used clamps to help hold the sole in place. I did find it stopped running on hot days pretty quick, becoming more of that moldable consistency.



*Glue drying, showing the solid bead. The flexing middle and heel curve, as well as the inside front strap area were glued.*



*Flex test of the first shoe and the glue held up.*



*The second sandal had even come apart internally*



*Repairs dried during the recent rain, and even the crack cross the ball of the foot is holding up*



*The Garmont boots are started, and I am optimistic*

The repairs were better than previously achieved. The packaging recommends storing in the freezer or fridge. I put mine in the fridge door, and needed to use a nail to dig a few millimetres of cured

glue from inside the top of the tube, and pliers to open it, but from there it was fine. This was the other reason I bought a fresh tube for emergencies. The glue can be hard to get off of your hands, so if you have them, disposable silicone gloves will be useful.

The verdict? If you want some good glue to repair your wading or hiking boots, this would be great. It may be a little stiff for breathable waders, but maybe it will get you out of a wet spot on cold fishing day – you might even be able to thin it out if required (I think they have tips for that on the tube). I still have one more section on the toe to finish, but I am confident I'll get some wear out of these this autumn.