

FAQ

Air and water adjustment

Injector and needle

Q: Why is there an injector and needle with each Sandpicture? Do I need to use that tool?

A: Each Sandpicture is filled with sand, water and air. Water evaporates. That's a very natural thing. Therefore the balance between air bubbles and water changes over time and you will need the injector and the manual to maintain the Sandpicture over many years.

Water level

Q: In trying to adjust the air pressure I mistakenly took out a bit of the water. How does one know how much water there should be?

A 1: Refill the same amount of water

A 2: Regarding to our booklet the water level is generally indicated by the level of the sand. See appendix 1)

My injector removes water instead of air

Q: I am trying to speed up the sand flow and remove air with the syringe provided. The syringe seems to be removing water instead of air and nothing changes. What should I do?

A: First of all, please read the instructions very accurately.

If the injector reaches the water only, of course you can remove water only. To remove air, you should stick the needle into the air bubble. In other words: First move the bubbles to the air-hole if you want to adjust the air.

Please take care to refill water if you already have extracted some. Use still bottled water.

My question is, the picture does not seem to be as active as when I bought it. Can you please tell me how to "renew" the sand activity ?

Your question is a regular one and the answer is: Yes, you definitely should revive your sand-art to restart the relaxing fun of moving sands.

The water inside the pictures is evaporating.

That's a natural thing.

Now you probably have a lot of bubbles inside the picture.

What you have to do is having one of our injectors and an instruction booklet to do proper maintenance.

You need to get the air out and water must be refilled.

All easy done - takes you a couple of minutes.

You can go online and have the accessories ordered from our US based distributor Chris Wootten, called The Sandguy.

<http://www.pitkinstearns.com/>

If you have any questions, please contact us again.

Appendix

For those who are really curious and those who want to know the world in detail.

1) Water level

Imagine that the Sandpicture is a sealed container. It is an independent system of its own and therefore follows other rules than on open container like i.e. a glass of water.

The glasses are flexible and bending according to over-pressure or under-pressure.

If you fill more water, the pressure blows up the container and enlarges the space between the glasses. But the amount of sand remains the same and therefore the sand level (horizon) will be lowered.

If water has evaporated or been extracted from the Sandpicture, the volume of the container is shrunk. Now the same amount of sand is in a container of less volume. Therefore the sand level (horizon) will be higher.

If the sand covers 50 % or more of your Sandpicture you better refill water.

When pushing water into the container, it will widen up and release more space for the sand. The sand level will lower.

You have to be careful with the amount and therefore go according to the rough rules and if necessary repeat the action.

Rough rules

Screenie /Horizon/Diamond - 2 ml

Window/Movie S/Triple X/Deep Sea - 3 ml

Movie M/Ballerina – 5 ml

Movie L/Solitaire – 8 ml

Movie XL/Sahara/Black Beauty – 10 ml

This is the rule for each one of our Sand Arts. Please be sure, that it is as easy as can be. Everybody can deal with it and it doesn't need a nurse or a doctor to fix your picture.

2) Air re-appears quickly

Hello Klaus,

My wife and I received a "Screenie" as a Christmas present in 2012. The friend who gave it to us has another model and we enjoyed looking at hers when we visited last autumn. We love the changing "landscapes" but this one has always required more frequent emptying of excess air and now a stream of very small bubbles is apparent when it is flipped over, so there must be a tiny leak in the air seal. It is not from one of the access points for the air/water needle, and when I press on the frame at the point where the bubbles appear they stop. Have you a suggestion for overcoming this problem? Needless to say, we are very disappointed and would like ours to work properly or be replaced. We live in the UK.

It is always difficult to say without seeing the picture.

If you evacuated too much air without refilling water, the picture is having troublesome under-pressure.

Where the picture is sealed it occasionally can suck air then, which is what you describe.

Please refill water and see if that cures the problem.

Use still drinking water from a bottle.

When you still can't get it running properly, the picture has a real leak. This happens, even though we are checking them three times before sending them out.

In that case please let us know what model / colour you are holding and we will send you replacement.

3) Kids handling the injector

Hello!

My 11 year old Daughter received a Pink Screenie as a gift from her Grandma. It was purchased at the Denver art Museum. We have the receipt.

She inserted the needle and pushed the plunger and the glass popped and broke. She was really liking this gift for about 10 minutes before this happened. Can you please let me know if she did anything wrong ? She wants another one of these but I am unsure if we should get

her one. We would like to have it replaced if possible.

Thank you

I would suggest that an 11 years old young lady should not be left alone with the injector. Her parents should at least read the instructions and doing the maintenance or helping with it, because those young lads sometimes don't get the clue that the injector isn't really part of the toy.

4) Cloudy water – replace all water

... It is still working well, but I am wondering if that extreme temperature may have contributed to somewhat cloudy water now in the sand picture. Can I replace the water completely?

Have two injectors prepared.

Most preferable the blue lock injectors, the long ones we formerly used for big items. (0.6 x 60 mm)

Warm the rubber frame in hot water – at least half of the frame.

Once the rubber gets soft you can take it away from the glass easily.

Now inject the two needles at opposite sides.

At one side get rid of the injector, just the needle shall stick in the picture.

At the other side you use the injector to suck out all the water.

The open needle will allow air into the picture to avoid under-pressure.

This all shall be done, while the Sandpicture is lying flat.

Don't do it while the picture is standing upright, because then you will have troubles to get the proper balance once you refill with fresh water:

Now have the fresh soapy water prepared and start pushing in fresh liquid.

Keep the open needle on the other side to allow the air out of the picture avoiding over pressure.

Soapy water you preferable use our original soapy water.

But you can try using water with some dish-washer liquid or hand washing liquid soap.

Test the liquid soap weather it makes a milky water when stirred with water. It shall stay clear.

We cannot guarantee proper and continuous function if using your own kind of soap.

Only use bottled drinking water!

5) Perfect air adjustment

The landscape is just a flat line across. Maybe a slight slope up on one side. I have checked air bubble by using scaling measure and added a little more air with no change. Is this defective?

Each one Sandpicture has a bit of its own character.

Some are generally moving slower, some faster.

Now there are little extra tricks to establish the air barrier. Follow these simple instructions:

Before you turn the picture, rock it slowly a few times like your would rock a cradle. You will see the entire sand dune shifting. Through that rocking some water between the sand grains will be squeezed out and the sand will settle to become more solid.

Now let the picture rest for 3 – 5 minutes before you turn it over.

Turn it rather with a flip than with a rotation. That way you are sure to have the air coming up like a curtain.

If you rotate it like a clock, you must take action to move the air bubbles all across so the air barrier can establish. If you miss that part, there will be no air on one side to hold the sand.

If that all does not help, add a bit more air than the air scale is indicating.

6) Too much air in my brand new Sandpicture

Thank you for writing us with your concerns.

When a sand-art leaves The Sand Factory in Austria for far away destinations it can take several months, until you have it in your hands.

Mind: The water inside the Sandpicture evaporates constantly in micro quantities.

In other words: Your picture has already lost some water which needs to be refilled.

For this purpose please follow our instructions accurately.

If you only fill water, the water level will not automatically become higher, because the air still remains in the picture. But you create pressure in the picture.

Therefore, as recommended in the instructions:

Refill one injector with water and remove as much air.

Repeat those two steps, until the air amount is according to the enclosed air-scale.

If this leaves any questions with you, please do not hesitate contacting us again.

7) What kind of sands are you using?

The Sand blend we are using is probably the biggest distinct to any other product calling itself „Sandpicture“.

Good reason for calling ours Sand-art!

We blend 4 – 6 different kinds of sand, whereat every of those sands has a different density, which results in different floating speeds. The different densities are based on the kind of materials and the size of grains we are using.

Generally the sands in our art works are:

a) naturally crushed minerals: sands – which can be found in deserts, on beaches, or river banks, sand grains which are crushed by natural forces

b) mechanically crushed minerals: especially the very fine grains are difficult to source naturally. Therefore we have companies, which crush minerals (could be regular rock stones or gem stones) into fine grains

c) coloured sands: some bright colours are unavailable at natural sources. That's why we colour or stain quartz or other minerals

d) artificial materials: the glitter and bright colours in our sand blends are man-made materials, which we source from such industries, which make pigments or decorative glitter flakes

8) Science and sand

In science there is a scale, which indicates the size of sand.

All grains between 0.06 and 2 mm are called sand, no matter what material it is. Even sugar therefore can be called sand, when it is about scientific measuring.

Materials below that size are called silt and shouldn't be used for Sandpictures, materials above that size are called gravel or pebbles and can't be used in Sandpictures.

9) I have added and extracted water several times to fix my picture

1. Your actions adding and extracting water/air have messed the balance of soap and pressure inside. Unfortunately that's a bit more complicated to fix. What kind of water did you add? – My quick tip for a potential cure is: Add a mixture of 50%/50% dish washer and water. Test the dish washer first: When mixing with water it should stay clear. So add around 2 ml – that's shown on your injector. Extract all air.

Until it moves properly, shake or tap it gently to let the sand go completely through at least four times. Adjust the air level and see what happens.

2. Storing the picture for a longer time doesn't affect the sealant but the sand gets sticky somehow and it needs some care to get it back to proper work. This means again: Tap the glass or shake it slightly to let the sand through 3 or 4 times.

10) I bought a small sand picture "screenie" about 3 years and for the past year and a half it has been leaking air. At least that is what I think because I have to add air about every week

If you tell that air is leaking after 1.5 years, say the last 1.5 years, I must assume, that you refilled water at one point.

With refilling too much water, you cause over-pressure inside the picture, which is responsible for pushing the air bubbles out of the picture, this happens by transmission through the silicone sealant.

Most probably the sand in your picture covers below 40 % of the entire glass surface.

If you now extract some water, you will relief the pressure and the air will remain in your picture.

Let me know, if I assume the right thing and if you are not sure about it, please let me have a photo of your picture in the state of all sand settled.

11) I've taken air out of my Sandpicture several times and in a couple of days the air is back in and the sand won't move.

Water evaporates. That's a natural thing.

In a Sandpicture this happens in the form of transmission through the silicone sealed rim.

If you are only taking out air, you create under-pressure, which in return sucks air back into the picture.

You have to refill water to equalize the pressure in your Sand-art.

Please refer to our instruction booklet.

12) I received a Deep Sea Sculpture at the beginning of the year as a gift and I am having difficulties regulating the amount of air. It seems that there is a leaky seal--that air is slowly being taken into the sculpture, which means that I need to remove air every few days.

Every Sand-Art is sealed with silicone, which allows gasses through - we call this diffusion.

For the matter of fact water can evaporate out of the artwork which is just natural.

In reverse air will move into the picture to equalize the inside pressure.

Now if you suck air out of your device, you create under-pressure, which increases the speed of sucking air through the sealant into the picture.

You have to refill water, that's the trick to equalize the pressure.

For your reference I attached the basic text of our instruction booklet.

Please read them accurately to understand, what you can do to rejuvenate the joy with your Sand-Art.

I don't know how often you punctured the air-hole in your Sandpicture.

Here are some special hints, which you might use.

The rubber frame is loose attached to the glass panes.

If you warm up the frame with hot water from tap, the rubber gets soft and elastic.

You can easily remove the rubber and use a bit of silicone to re-seal the area where you handled the picture.

After that you warm up the frame once again to re-attach it to the glasses.

When doing so please be sure to fit the airhole to a new spot. With that you will not again puncture the anyway weakened spot again.

13) My friend bought me a wonderful sand picture for Christmas which I had never opened up until my office finally moved locations. I opened it up last week and it doesn't work. I cannot regulate the air. I've looked up YouTube videos and everything. It doesn't take air out or put air in. My beautiful sand picture doesn't work and I'm very upset about it. I've always wanted one.

It seems we are having a simple problem here, as you mentioned you cannot take air out neither push air in.

Whenever you push the needle through the silicone sealant, a tiny bit of silicone can block the needle.

Most probably that is what happened.

And here is the easy solution:

Fill your plunger with air - take on the needle and push the plunger down hard, so it can blow free the needle.

You will hear the blow-out of the air.

Before you again stick the needle into your Sandpicture, please be sure to have 0.5 ml (5 lines) of air in your plunger first.

If your needle will get blocked again, that bit of air will help you blowing the needle free so you can start regulation of the air.

Could you follow my instructions?

Hope they help you to your target: viewing a wonderful Sandpicture, because that is what we want you to do, too.

14) I bought a Window Black Sandpicture in a shop in the Netherlands. It is my intention to give this as a present to my friend in the USA. My question is now how to best transport this gift in the airplane: hand luggage or in a big suitcase?

Whenever I fly there are Sandpictures in my checked or hand luggage.

Either ways work out if you take care that it is in the original box with the stuffing carton pieces.

You can freeze the Sandpicture and thaw it again - no harm.

The low cabin pressure - never mind.

It is amazing, that the customs officers never take it out of hand luggage, even though there is water inside and an injector in the accessories.

My friend Chris, our US distributor one time asked the officers, because we have some customers selling our art works in airport shops.

15) Hi! Isn't it possible to replace the air by a more stable gas that is less or no evaporating?

Yes we could use some alternative gasses.

But Water is evaporating and the picture will suck 'regular' air from the environment.

So after a while we will have to deal with normal air inside anyway.