

WHATNOT

LEATHER & FABRIC

OUR LEATHERS!

Following is an overview of leather production and finishes. It is intended as a guide only and is by no means comprehensive of all factors which influence the final look of individual hides.

Leather is a natural product and thus each hide differs from the next with regards markings, grain, texture and colour. This subtle process of differentiation is part of leather's enduring appeal and is the result of factors such as the breed of the bovine, their age and sex, prevalent weather conditions, diet, and whether they are local or imported.

All the above factors combine to influence the manner in which the hides absorb the tanning chemicals and dyes, and this creates the resulting individual personalities.

Cattle also occasionally scratch and mark themselves on vegetation and fencing, and they are susceptible to insect bites which can also leave permanent scars. Some of these marks sit under the surface but can be seen and are deemed accepted as a naturally occurring addition to the character and uniqueness of leather. Most hides have brand marks which are usually cut around and deeper scars and tick bites etc are usually cut around or can be hidden in an obscure place on the finished product.

GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

Aniline – is a type of leather dyed exclusively with soluble dyes without covering the surface with a topcoat paint. The resulting product retains the hide's natural surface and pores, scars and the natural grain remain visible. For this reason, aniline leather is one of the most precious finishing in leather manufacturing: only high quality leathers are suitable for an aniline finish. Aniline leathers are usually soft to the touch and supple and most game skins or darker colours are finished like this.

Semi-aniline leather is produced through a very similar process to full-aniline, but is often more deeply coloured, and has a thin protective top coat added to protect it from wear, fading and staining. Pull-up aniline leather has additional oil or wax applied to give it a distressed look.

Corrected grain – The leather is sometimes also buffed or stuccoed. It is dyed and a top coat sprayed to its surface and a grain pattern is rolled onto the leather by a large heat roller, which produces a uniform texture. The hides are then milled to soften the leather and give it a more subtle finish

Crust – an un-processed hide, usually a light grey colour. These hides can be dyed to any colour at all, but only a certain accuracy can be achieved.

Effects and finishes - there are many processes available which create different finishes such as the addition of oils and waxes, crackling, creasing, pressing, milling and buffing.

Gage – is the thickness of the leather, usually between 1.2mm and 1.4mm. Usually, the thicker the leather the more pronounced the grain [or pebble], and the thinner the leather the more stretch.

Grain side & suede side - grain side is the previously hair-on side, and suede is the underside.

Measurement – hides are sold whole, and are usually about 4sqm² in area. They are measured by laser and size is stamped on the underside. You don't pay for holes! Yay!

Milling – the leather is put into big vat-like wooden drums and spun around, to soften the leather after staking and pressing.

Pull up – these hides typically semi-aniline, are treated with a protective top coat and an additional oil before finishing, and thus the colour lightens attractively when the leather is stretched.

Pebble – The fine bumps on the grain side of the hide, left by the hair follicles.

Pressing – large heat rollers are used to give hides a finished look and help bond chemicals, sometimes milling will then take place after to soften the leather.

Splitting – this is when the underside of a hide is removed in the wet blue state. This underside can be processed into usable leather, but is weaker and has no natural grain. **We do not sell this leather as part of our stock**, but it can be acquired.

Staking - this is where the hide is stretched on racks and dried in a warm air machine to take out some of the stretch.

Veg tan leather - is tanned using ingredients found in different vegetable matter, such as tree bark. It is generally thicker and stiffer than other leathers, used for belts, shoe soles and rimpies, and can be bought in different thicknesses, and in either butts or sides.

Wet Blue - this leather is stored in a chemical solution before it is sent to be processed. It can be stored like this for a few months.

FYI – We are constantly researching, trying, testing, buying and dyeing new leathers and will try to make, find or import what you are looking for. We also have bonded leathers, vinyl, and suede look products. Old, new, crazier than a zoo, we will try and do it for you!!

WHATNOT LEATHER – ex stock or on order for you.

Antique: this leather has a lightly waxed and milled till it has a very fine irregular, crackle finish around the grain. Natural under-the-surface markings can be seen, giving it an authentic lived-in look. These have proven to be good wearing in both domestic and contract, providing they are looked after with the correct products. See below. Average hide 4m2 .

Boland – A robust soft but pronounced grain leather for all purpose. Classic Handsome leather. Ave Hide size 4m2.

Buffed: This is a drum dyed leather that is sprayed with a contrast colour and the tips of the grain are then buffed off. The result is a two tone effect, with parts of the hide feeling very suede-like and smooth, and parts where the pebble is more pronounced. It can have a water resistant protection coat applied after it is made up. Average hide size 4m2.

Diesel – A thicker leather that has been heat pressed with an oil to give you a beautiful smooth gloss that will break down with use to a soft as butter velvet touch. Authentic, innovative, great for bags, and certain types of furniture, but not traditional deep buttoning. Ave hide size 4m2.

Gruffalo – Bold grain on this slightly thicker cut hide with a subtle oil pull and matt finish. Ave hide size 4m2

Himba – These are a well-crafted antique look that will not change much over time but maintain the look that's been crafted into the leather and finish. Hides are approx. 5m2

Karabib: this range is similar to the Okavango range but has been lightly buffed to get a smoother look. Ave hide size 4m2.

Khoi- Big hides, Beautifully finished soft corrected grain, that can be used in both the domestic and contract market with a broad range of colours from bright to black. Ave hide size 5m2.

Kudu/Oryx: these game skins are drum dyed and lightly finished. They have scratches and most hides hole or two, but it has a fantastic soft glove leather feel and bigger grain than bovine leather. Average hide size: 2sqmtrs – 3sqmtrs. This is also sold in following percentage, 70% first grade 20% second grade and 10% third grade. Ave hide size 2m2 [game skins]

Luxury Leather: this creamy to white range is 'corrected grain', meaning that it is pigmented to a solid, flat colour and has a uniform grain embossed to its surface. We can dye luxury leather to a specific pantone or paint swatch and the result is an intense and even colour distribution for a contemporary look. The embossed grain can limit the amount of stretch this natural leather has, so may suit some of the large style contemporary furniture. Ave hide size 4m2.

Maasi- Inspired by the open African plains, this mottled looking suede has been hand buffed and finished with a liquid repellent finish, but still smooth and soft to the touch. Ave hide size 5m2

Memphis – This is a combination of a suede pressed with and oil topcoat, which creates a subtle soft suede look with a sheen of Elvis's used blue suede shoes. The king will be happy if you use this leather. Ave hide size 4m2.

Milano – A classic Classy leather finish that has subtle sheen and shading of a well-loved Italian shoe. Ave hide size 4m2

Okavango: Okavango is a semi-aniline product and has a lovely natural grain. A light spray of colour is applied to give it depth and enhance its resistance to light and stains. It will maintain its' good looks and age naturally over a longer period of time. Ave hide size 4m2.

Oromo – This is a new and exciting suede/nubuck finish that is crafted as part of the top coat, the but soft touch of the leather will make doubt that there is protective top coat. It's looking to be a top seller for both the modern and traditional furniture. Ave hide size 5m2.

Pista: Pista has a waxed finish with an irregular broad creased finish applied to it by hand. This leather is made to age and it will become softer and more creased where worn in. Natural, under-the-surface scratches and markings can be seen through the clear wax top coat. Ave hide size 4m2



Portofino: this leather has a marbled look about it, and subtle colour shading can be seen. It has a lovely silicone sheen on its surface and will age beautifully.

Regal Oil Pull Up: this product has a smooth, and subtly sheened finish. It lightens where it is pulled or stretched which adds to its sophisticated antique feel. Lovely under-the-surface marks show through when the leather is pulled. The leather creases where it is used/sat on, but the oils then return into the creases, and over time a lovely lived-in look appears on the areas getting more wear. The oil deepens the colours of hide, but all the shades come to life beautifully when upholstered. Seeing is believing. Ave hide size 4m2.

Semi- aniline: generally has a pigmented finish over the natural grain, which allows depth of colour, and accuracy as well as batch consistency. Its light topcoat will help protect it from wear and fading, but one needs to take more care of aniline and semi aniline leathers. Ave hide size 4m2.

Sienna: is the base leather that our custom colours are dyed from. We carry a small range of finished Sienna leathers. They are semi-aniline but have been treated with a top coat and a light grain print making them a good choice for contract applications. See stock colours or make your own. Ave hide size 4m2.

Taureg – A matt crackle looking leather crafted into the topcoat, so what you see is what you can count on getting. Soft and serviceable, and suitable for all leather uses. Ave hide size 5m2.

Venetian – Smooth and sophisticated finish, just the right amount of sheen, hints of 2 shades in one. Ave hide size 4m2.

Vintage Crackle: this leather has a shiny, waxed top coat, an intense all over crackle effect, and authentic antique look of a natural aged leather. Ave hide size 4m2.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

This is a general outline, as there are many different leather finishes, and cleaning products. If you are not sure then ask or test first!

- A good wipe down with a soft cloth and a cleaning cream is suggested every 3 to 6 months, depending on the amount of use. Contract and restaurant would be bi monthly or when required.
- Allow this to dry and then lightly rub your leather down with a non-sticky wax, or leather conditioner/leather food, and allow that to dry and then buff with a dry cloth to shine. This can be done more often if you feel that your leather is looking dry, or gets lots of use.
- If a spill occurs, a dry cloth to absorb the liquid or use a well wrung damp cloth as soon as possible, to address the area. Marks or stains that may have penetrated the surface of the leather should be tackled with a deep cleaner. Begin with a gentle rub, leave it to dry and assess the success. Repeat, gently, if required. Use a soft white cloth if possible.
- Depending on the type of leather it may require different methods to keep clean and maintain.
- NB. Overly vigorous rubbing can change the nature of the top coat, especially if wet.
- Try and keep leather out of direct sunlight, it dries out and can fade leather.
- DO NOT use **non** approved leather chemicals, or abrasive cloths

We stock a range of cleaners that is widely used and recommended by the leather trade:

- Deep cleaning cream
- Non-sticky balsam
- Leather food
- General purpose cleaning and conditioning foam spray
- Leather and fabric protector spray, (keeps moisture and liquids out] should be applied soon after the leather's been made up. More for anilines than semi-anilines and suede
- Coloured rejuvenating creams: ruby, tans, brown and black, or a colour you require.

GOOD TO KNOW

- The different types of leathers all have pros and cons and one should always try and understand the intended application, client expectation and understanding, so that we can best guide you.
- Leather is a naturally strong upholstery, it will exceed a 100 000 rubs, but there are many different finishes thus each will wear differently depending on usage and other factors.
- It is naturally fire retardant, but would still needs a special treatment for aviation use.
- Leather does have a tendency to stretch a bit initially, like shoes or bags do, but again this is dependent on the finish, its thickness, and the item being made, a lot can be done in the manufacturing of furniture to combat the bagging of seats.

- Although topcoats add a protective layer and a water resistance, most leathers do breath and liquids left on the leather may sink in eventually. The more natural the finish the more easily it will absorb moisture.
- Leather not cared for properly, will become more porous with age as topcoats or finishes are worn down.
- Full aniline leathers or those with clear coat finishes will be more likely to fade, as will the bolder or brighter colours. Avoid direct sunlight or uv exposure!
- Domestic upholstery leather is not made with the same durability and UV protection coating as car upholstery leathers, so don't compare.
- All orders are shaded [especially the more natural leathers] and selected from stocks available.
- Please note that there is natural colour migration and so make sure your samples are current and orders are checked before cut. Seriously this is your responsibility as the trade.
- We have to pull your order first to get the final invoice amount, which takes time.
- Raw materials, chemicals and finishes are constantly changing and this can cause variations in the finished product so please do always check current dye batches. One can get better consistency of colour on corrected grains and semi anilines as colour is used in or before the top coat.



Whatnot

At your service