

DICTIONARY *of* LEATHER TERMINOLOGY

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## **DICTIONARY OF LEATHER TERMINOLOGY**

**I**n an era when new “miracle” fibers come and go almost daily, leather remains the greatest miracle of them all. It is the product of a modern industry which has wedded 21<sup>st</sup> century science to the ancient art of tanning. Utilizing the latest technological developments, America’s tanners are producing leathers that are new in appearance, new in use, and new in their appeal to the public. At the same time, tanners are keeping pace with progress in waste utilization, pollution control, energy conservation and safety consciousness.

The increased consumer demand for leather has underscored the need for accurate information by the general public, retailers and manufacturers concerning all types of leather.

Years ago, Leather Industries of America compiled the first authoritative glossary of terms generally used in the tanning and leather products industries. This was intended for use by the trade, as well as by educational institutions, and has frequently been used as the basis for decisions by the courts and Federal regulatory agencies.

The Leather Research Laboratory, located at the University of Cincinnati, also provides a wide range of analytical, technical and certification services designed specifically for the leather industry. For more information, contact:

**Leather Research Laboratory**  
University of Cincinnati  
5997 Center Hill Avenue  
Building C  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45224  
(513) 242-6300 / Fax (513) 242-9797  
[corynj@uc.edu](mailto:corynj@uc.edu)

**[www.leatherusa.org](http://www.leatherusa.org)**

*This ninth edition has been prepared to provide manufacturers and retailers with accurate information and terminology for use in labeling and advertising products.*

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## CATEGORIES OF LEATHER

### (1) CATTLE GROUP

Steer, Cow and Bull hides, producing leather for:

- Shoe and slipper outsoles, insoles, uppers, linings, counters, welts, heels, etc.
- Traveling bags, suitcases, briefcases, luggage straps, etc.
- Gloves and garments
- Upholstery for automobiles, furniture, airplanes, buses, decoration
- Handbags, purses, wallets, waist belts, other personal leather goods
- Harnesses, saddles, bridles, skirting (for saddles), etc.
- Machinery belting, packings, washers, aprons, carders, combers, pickers, etc.
- Footballs, basketballs, volleyballs and other sporting goods
- Laces, scabbards, holsters, etc.

Kips or Kipskins (from large calves or undersized cattle), producing leather for:

- Shoe and slipper uppers and linings
- Handbags and other personal leather goods
- Gloves and garments
- Sweat bands for hats
- Rawhide and parchment
- Athletic helmets
- Bookbindings
- Handicrafts, etc.

### (2) SHEEP AND LAMB GROUP

Wooled skins, Hair skins (Cabrettas), Shearlings, producing leather for:

- Shoe and slipper uppers and linings
- Gloves and garments
- Chamois
- Handbags and other personal leather goods
- Moutons and shearlings (skins with wool on)
- Parchment
- Textile rollers
- Hats, hat sweat bands, millinery and caps
- Bookbindings
- Piano actions
- Sporting goods (balls, gloves, etc.)

### (3) GOAT AND KID GROUP

Skins producing leather for:

- Shoe and slipper uppers, linings
- Fancy leather goods, handbags
- Gloves and garments
- Bookbindings

### (4) EQUINE GROUP

Horse, Colt, Ass, Mule and Zebra hides, producing leather for:

- Shoe soles and uppers
- Gloves and garments
- Aviators' clothing
- Luggage
- Belts
- Sporting goods (baseball covers and mitts, etc.)

### (5) BUFFALO GROUP

Domesticated Land and Water Buffalo (not American Bison, whose hide is not tanned for leather), producing leather for:

- Shoe soles and uppers
- Fancy leather goods, luggage
- Handbags
- Buffing wheels

### (6) PIG AND HOG GROUP

Pig, Hog, Boar, Peccary and Carpincho (a Brazilian rodent) skins, producing leather for:

- Gloves
- Fancy leather goods, luggage
- Shoe uppers
- Innersoles, counters, etc.
- Saddlery and harnesses
- Upholstery

### (7) DEER GROUP

Fallow Deer, Reindeer, Elk and Caribou skins, producing leather for:

- Shoe uppers
- Gloves
- Clothing
- Fancy leather goods
- Piano actions
- Moccasins
- Mukluks

### (8) KANGAROO AND WALLABY GROUP

Skins producing leather for:

- Shoe uppers

### (9) EXOTIC AND FANCY LEATHERS

Frog, Seal, Shark, Walrus and Turtle (Aquatic Group)  
Camel, Elephant, Ostrich and Pangolin (Land Group)  
Alligator, Crocodile, Lizard, and Snake (Reptile Group)

## TERMS IN GENERAL USE IN THE LEATHER INDUSTRY

*In describing various classes of leather, the name of the animal from which the skin or hide was taken is generally used. Certain exceptions, which have become established trade practices, are cited in the definitions which follow. Otherwise, adequate explanation should be made.*

**Alligator.** A general term used for leather made from the skins of all aquatic species with a grain similar to the American alligator.

**Alligator Grained Leather.** This term is used to distinguish the alligator grain effect, which is embossed on various types of leather, such as calf, sheep, or cattlehide, from the genuine reptilian leather. Terms such as "alligator calf" are not permitted by the Federal Trade Commission.

**Alum Leather.** Leather produced by alum tannage usually in combination with other substances but which are not in sufficient amount to alter the alum tanned character of the leather.

**Aniline-Dyed Leather.** Leather which has been colored by dyes as distinguished from leather treated by pigments or other opaque materials.

**Antelope Finish Suede.** Term applied to lambskin, goatskin, or calfskin, sueded and finished to resemble antelope.

**Antelope Leather.** A fine, soft leather made from an antelope skin, velvety in texture and sheen, sueded on the flesh side; so rare, that for practical purposes, it is virtually non-existent.

**Automobile Leather.** See "Upholstery Leather."

**Back.** A "back" is formed by first cutting the hide longitudinally along the backbone, then trimming off head and belly, leaving a "bend" and shoulder.

**Bag Leather.** See "Traveling Bag, Suitcase and Strap Leather."

**Baseball Leather.** Leather used as the cover portion of a baseball. The better grade of balls have covers of alum tanned cattlehide or horsehide front leather.

**Belly.** A "belly" is that part of the hide from the under side of the animal.

**Belt Leathers.** Leather that goes into waist belts, as distinguished from Belting Leather, which is used for the transmission of power in machinery. Belt leather is usually considered a sub-class of fancy leather. It is made of various leathers, with cattlehide the most common, for men's belts; sheep and goat skin for women's belts. Often specially treated on the flesh side in unlined belts.

**Belting Leather.** Leather used for the manufacture of leather belts for transmitting power in machinery. It is made from the butts of high-grade cattlehides.

**Bend.** A sole-leather "back" with shoulder trimmed off.

**Bleeding.** Transfer of materials exuded from leather to other materials coming in contact with it.

**Blue.** Term usually found in the phrase "in the blue." It is applied to hides or skins that have been chrome-tanned but not finished.

**Boarded Leathers.** Sides or skins finished by folding with the grain side in and rubbing the flesh side with a cork-surfaced instrument known as a hand-board. Machinery is now also used. The effect is sometimes imitated by embossing. Also called "box" or "willow" finish.

**Bookbinding Leather.** Bookbinding leathers can be made of skivers, cattlehide grains, cattlehide splits, sheepskins, goatskins, calfskins and pigskins.

**Box Calf or Sides.** See "Boarded Leathers."

**Bridle Leather.** Term refers to a harness-finished strap leather.

**Buck Sides.** Cattlehide upper shoe leather, with grain surface buffed to simulate genuine buckskin. Sometimes designated by proprietary trade names, such as "Nubuck," "Ryback," etc.

**Buckskin.** General term applied to leather from deer and elk skins; used for shoes and gloves, and to some extent in clothing. Only the outer cut of the skin from which the surface grain has been removed may be correctly defined as "genuine buckskin." Leather finished from the split or under cut of deerskin must be described as "split buckskin."

**Buffalo Leather.** Leather tanned from domesticated land and water buffalo of the Far East (not the American Bison).

**Buffing.** Buffing leather is a very light cut of the grain portion of a cattlehide and used mainly for bookbinding and fancy leather goods.

**Butt.** Part of the hide or skin covering the rump or hindpart of an animal; for example, a "horse butt." A Belting Butt is a cattlehide tanned for leather belting after the head, belly and tail have been trimmed off. A Butt Bend is what remains of a Belting Butt after trimming off a double shoulder.

**Cabretta Leather.** Leather from the skin of hair sheep. Cabretta leather is largely used for the glove and garment trade.

**Calfskin Leather.** Leather made from the skins of the young of cattle and characterized by distinct grain and fiber structure.

**Capeskin or Cape Leather.** Terms used for the glove and garment leather made from sheepskins, with the natural grain preserved. The term should be confined to leather from South African hair sheep. Genuine capeskin from South Africa makes a light, flexible, fine grain, durable leather, generally superior to that made from wool sheepskins. When used to designate sheepskin other than the South African product, it should be qualified as "Domestic Capeskin," "Spanish Capeskin," etc. Term should never be applied to a skiver.

**Carding Leather.** A special type of side leather used on the cards of textile machinery. The leather lies flat against the beds of the cards, the teeth being forced through it.

**Carpincho.** A leather made from the hide of a water rodent indigenous to Argentina and Uruguay. More elastic and softer than that of peccary, carpincho is chiefly used in the manufacture of men's fine dress and sport gloves. Generally chrome tanned and washable; classed as a pigskin.

**Case Leather.** See "Traveling Bag, Suitcase and Strap Leather."

**Cattlehide Leathers.** Leathers made from the hides of cows, steers, and bulls; sometimes includes kipskins.

**Chamois Leather.** A soft leather, sometimes called chamoise, originally made from the skins of the Alpine antelope, or chamois, but presently from the fleshers, or under-splits of sheepskins. Oil tanned and suede-finished, they are principally used for cleaning and polishing, and in the manufacture of gloves and garments.

**Chrome Retan.** Leather which has been first chrome tanned and then retanned with vegetable and/or synthetic extracts.

**Chrome Tannage.** Tannage of leather with chromium compounds, sometimes with small amounts of some other tanning agent but not enough to alter the chrome tanned character of the leather.

**Clothing Leathers.** Name covers material for leather coats, jackets, hats and breeches made from sheepskins, cabretta, cattle and horsehides.

**Colorado Steers.** Term refers to side-branded steerhides; not necessarily from Colorado.

**Comber Leather.** Used on combing machines in the textile industry, this is a soft, mellow and tough leather, which is tanned from steerhides, heavily stuffed with grease, and usually hand boarded or otherwise softened.

**Combination Tanned.** Term refers to tannage of two or more agents, such as chrome and vegetable.

**Cordovan.** The name cordovan is applied only to leathers made from the shell of horse butts and used for shoe uppers. It is known for its non-porosity and durability.

**Corrected Grain.** See "Snuffed Finish."

**Country Hides.** Term refers to hides removed by butchers and farmers. The quality is usually lower than meat-packers' hides because they are removed by less skilled hands and are not cured as well.

**Cowhide Leather.** Term specifically applied to leather made from hides of cows, although it is generally loosely used to designate any leather tanned from hides of animals of the bovine species.

**Crocking.** Term refers to the rubbing off of colored or other surface substances from leather onto other materials.

**Crop.** Term applied to a "side" of leather with belly trimmed off, retaining both head and shoulder.

**Croupon.** Term refers to an untanned, whole cattlehide with belly and shoulder cut off, comparable to a butt bend in tanned leather.

**Crushed Leather.** Term applied to leather which has the natural grain accentuated during manufacture by plating, boarding or other process. Term also applied to leather which has been "grained" artificially.

**Curried Leather.** Any leather that has been subjected to the currying process.

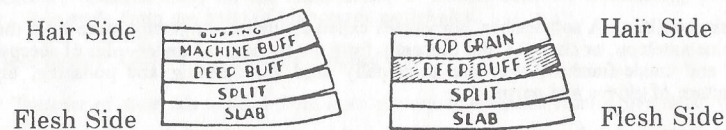
**Currying.** The process of incorporating oils and greases into leather after tanning and otherwise preparing it for specific purposes, such as for the manufacture of transmission belts, shoe welting, etc.

**Cut Stock.** Term generally applied to bottom stock for shoes, such as soles, taps, lifts, blocks and strips cut from sole leather. Also applied to cut-to-pattern leather.

**Deacon.** The skin of a newborn calf.

**Deep Buff.** The first cut under the Top Grain, Hand Buff or Machine Buff. No traces of grain remain.

Diagram Showing Two Methods of Splitting Hides



**Deerskin.** A leather tanned from deerskin with the grain surface intact, not with grain removed as in buckskin.

**Degrained Leathers.** Genuine suedes, finished on the flesh side of skins from which the grain has been removed after tanning by splitting, abrading or other process.

**Drumhead Leather.** Parchment or rawhide for percussion instruments such as drums.

**Ecrase.** French for "Crushed."

**Electrified Lambskins, Electrified Shearlings.** Term applied to dyed and processed sheepskin shearlings finished to resemble furskins.

**Elk.** A trade term for cattlehide shoe leather of a special tannage and finish. Genuine elk leather is designated by the term "buckskin." "Smoked elk" or "elk side" leather is cattlehide shoe leather, but should be qualified as "elk-finished cowhide," "elk-finished kip," etc.

**Embossed Leather.** Hides or skins finished with designs stamped on by etched, engraved or electrotyped plates or rollers. Used extensively on fancy pocketbook leather, upholstery and bag leathers, as well as splits and on shoe upper leather. Embossed designs may be an imitation of the natural grain of different animal skins, or designs of an artificial nature.

**Facing Leathers.** A lightweight leather generally used for facing seams and binding the edges of shoe uppers. Term also applied to lightweight smooth calf and lamb, and to skivers, of which the inner surfaces of billfolds and wallets are frequently made.

**Factory Sole Leather.** Sole leather used in shoe factories as distinguished from leather used by shoe repairmen.

**Fancy Leather.** Leathers made from hides and skins of all kinds which have commercial importance and value primarily because of grain, or distinctive finish, whether natural or the result of processing. Such processing may be graining, printing, embossing, ornamenting (including in gold, silver, and aluminum finishes), or any other finishing operation enhancing the appeal of leather.

**Finders Sole Leather.** Very heavy, firm and dense vegetable tanned sole leather, used by shoe repairers.

**Flesher.** Term used to describe the flesh-side or under-cut of a sheepskin, split before tanning. See "Chamois."

**Football Leather.** Leather used as the cover portion of a football. Now generally made of embossed or printed cattlehide leather.

**Formaldehyde Tanning.** A method of tanning by using a formalin solution in the manufacture of white leathers and washable glove leathers.

**French Kid.** Leather tanned from kidskins by an alum or vegetable tannage.

**Frizing.** A process for removing the grain by liming in making Mocha glove leather.

**Front.** Term applied to horsehides to distinguish the forepart of hide from the butt or hind portion. A whole front is about two-thirds of the area of the hide.

**Full Grain.** Outer cut taken from the hair side of the hide from which nothing except the hair and associated epidermis have been removed.

**Gasket Leather.** See "Hydraulic Leathers."

**Glazed Finish.** A leather with polished surface produced by heavy pressure of a roller of agate, glass, metal or other suitable material on a selected finish formulation.

**Glazed (Glace) Kid.** Chrome tanned goatskin and kidskin leather, in either black or colors, which has a glazed finish.

**Glove Leather.** Term covering two distinct classes: (1) the leather used for dress gloves, including those for street, riding, driving, and sportswear. Tanned predominantly from sheep and lambskins and to a lesser degree from deer, pig, goat, kid, and Mocha skins; and (2) the leather used for utilitarian or work gloves and made of a variety of hides and skins, of which the most important are horsehides, cattlehide splits, calfskins, sheepskins, and pigskins.

**Glove Splits.** Split chrome tanned cattlehide leather used for work gloves.

**Goatskin.** The skin of a mature goat or leather made therefrom; also referred to as "kid."

**Grain.** Term refers to the outer or hair side of a hide or skin. It also refers to the pattern of the outer surface after the hair or wool and epidermal tissue have been removed.

**Grained Leather.** Any leather on which the original, natural grain has been highlighted by a finishing process.

**Gun Metal.** Leather the shade of gun metal, usually with a dull finish.

**Gusset Leather.** A soft flexible leather used for gussets in shoes, bags, and cases.

**Hair Calf.** See "Slunk."

**Hair-On Leather.** Leather tanned without removing the hair from the skin or hide.

**Hand Buffs.** A term used to describe upholstery leather in which the top grain has been lightly buffed to remove the top of the hair follicles.

**Harness Leather.** A self-explanatory term which sometimes includes collar and saddlery leathers. Harness leather, including these related items, is practically all made of vegetable tanned cattlehides, except for a considerable quantity of pigskin used for making saddle seats.

**Hat Leather.** Sheepskin or calf leather, usually vegetable tanned, used for the sweat bands of hats or caps.

**Head.** Term applied to that part of the hide which is cut off at the flare into the shoulder.

**Heavy Leather.** A somewhat indefinite term, generally understood to include vegetable tanned sole, belting, strap, and mechanical leathers made from unsplit cattlehides.

**Hide.** As used in the leather industry, it refers to a whole pelt from one of the larger animals (cattle, horse, etc.), in contrast to the term "skin," which refers to the pelt of young or small animals.

**Hide Grades.** Standard hide grades, take-up and delivery practice are given in the booklet, "Trade Practices for Proper Packer Cattlehide Delivery," published by Leather Industries of America Inc., 1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W., Suite 515, Washington, D.C. 20007; (202) 342-8086.

**Horsehide.** Designates leather made from the hide of either horses or colts.

**Hydraulic Leathers.** A collective term sometimes used for the cattlehide leathers, vegetable, chrome or combination tannages, special stuffing being provided, which are employed in pump valves, as piston packings, and in other machinery.

**Imitation Leather.** Materials so made and finished as to resemble leather. Included are coated fabrics, rubber and rubber compositions, and plastic materials. Terms connoting genuine leather should not be used in trade names, as for example "plastic calf," "plastic leather," "compo leather," "leatherlyke," or "leatherette."

**In the Pickle.** Term used to describe skins from which the hair or wool has been removed and which are preserved in a condition ready for tanning usually in a wet state with brine, acid and sometimes polymer phosphates.

**In the Rough; In the Crust; In the White; In the Blue; In the Pearl.** A group of approximately equivalent terms used to describe leather which has been tanned, but not finished. "In the rough" or "rough tanned" and "in the crust" are most commonly applied to vegetable tanned cattlehide leathers; "in the white" is applied to alum, or formaldehyde-tanned sheepskins and lambskins; "in the blue" to chrome-tanned skins; "in the pearl" is chrome-tanned leather dried in the blue to a crust from which either white, black, or colored leather will be made.

**Iron.** Term used for measuring thickness of sole leather; 1 iron equals 1/48th of an inch.

**Kangaroo Leather.** Leather made from the hide of the Australian kangaroo or wallaby, usually chrome tanned with a glazed finish. Resembles glazed kid in appearance, but the grain of kangaroo is much finer than most glazed kid. It is stronger, weight for weight, than any other leather.

**Kid.** Leather made from the skin of a young goat. Also used in glove and shoe industries to refer to leather made from any goatskin.

**Kip or Kipskin.** Skin from an animal of the bovine species between the size of a calf and a mature animal. This term includes skins from calves which have grown larger than the size usually slaughtered for veal.

**Kosher Hide.** Hide of an animal which has been slaughtered according to Jewish religious custom by having its throat cut cross-wise, resulting in a different pattern of the hide sometimes referred to as a "cut-throat" or "stuck-throat."

**Lace Leather.** A form of rawhide leather (from cattlehides) for lacing together sections of power transmission belts; sometimes prepared also with an alum and oil, chrome, or combination tannage.

**Lambskin Leather.** Describes leather made from either lamb or sheepskins, inasmuch as the skins are identical in appearance after tanning.

**Larrigan Leather.** Name for oil tanned light hides, used largely for moccasins.

**Latigo Leather.** Cattlehide leather, sometimes alum and vegetable tanned, used for cinches, ties, saddle strings and other saddlery work and for army accoutrements.

**Leather.** A general term for hide or skin with its original fibrous structure more or less intact, tanned or treated to be imputrescible. The hair or wool may or may not have been removed. Leather is also made from a hide or skin which has been split into layers or segmented before or after tanning, but if the tanned hide or skin is disintegrated mechanically and/or chemically into fibrous particles, small pieces or powders and then, with or without the combination of a binding agent, is made into sheets or forms, such sheets or forms are not leather. Leathers may have surface coatings of a reasonable amount but beyond this the resulting product shall be described as a laminate or composite. However, the term laminated leather should not be used if the leather content is less than two-thirds of the total thickness.

**Levant.** Leather from goat, sheep and seal skins with a characteristic shrunken grain pattern produced in tannage. Leather with a similar pattern produced by embossing should be called "Levant-grain."

**Lining Leather.** Any leather used for making shoe linings, which includes sheep, kid, goat, cattle, calf, kip and splits.

**Loading.** The process of adding glucose, magnesium sulfate, or other materials to condition vegetable tanned leather for working in modern shoe machinery. Also known as "filling."

**Machine Buff.** That cut of the hide from which a buffing of approximately 1/64th of an inch (1 ounce) in thickness has been removed from the grain. This should leave a portion of the grain on approximately the entire hide.

**Manufacturer's Leather.** See "Factory Sole Leather."

**Mat Finish.** A smooth dull finish applied to chrome tanned leather for shoe uppers, handbags, belts, etc.

**Matadero Hides.** Hides from Argentina corresponding to city butcher or smaller packer hides of the United States.

**Mechanical Leathers.** A collective term for many types of leather used in connection with machinery and textile equipment. Such specialty leathers are explained more definitely under the specific designations or uses.

**Medium Buffs.** Formerly referred to as "Special Machine Buffs." See "Upholstery Leather."

**Mineral Tannage.** Leather produced by the use of chromium salts, alum, and other like mineral agents as distinguished from "vegetable tannages."

**Mocha Leather.** A leather made from any variety of hair sheep. After the grain has been removed by a liming process known as "frizing," the fine fibers below the grain are sueded. See "Suede Finish." It is one of the finest of nap finished glove leathers.

**Mocha Suede.** Arabian blackhead hair sheepskins (commonly called blackhead Mochas), chrome tanned, grain removed by mechanical abrading rather than by hand frizing, suede finished on flesh side. This leather retains most of the characteristics of the frized skin, particularly fineness of finish, due to closeness of fibers of the skin; is washable and wears well.

**Morocco Leather.** Vegetable tanned fancy goatskins having a distinctive grain produced by boarding or graining. Embossed imitation of the natural goat grain on other kinds of leather sometimes is called Morocco grained.

**Mouton.** A sheepskin shearling tanned and further finished for fur.

**Nap Finish.** A process in which the natural grain layer of the leather is removed and the outer surface of the leather is then given a napped finish. See also "Suede Finish."

**Napa Leather.** Chrome, alum or combination tanned grain sheep or lambskin glove leather, drum colored.

**Native Hides.** Hides from steers, cows or bulls which are free of brand marks.

**Oak Tanned Leather.** Common usage is any tannage of heavy leather with vegetable extract. The term originated with leather tanned using the bark of the oak tree.

**Offal.** Part of the hides and skins not normally used for making the finest grades of leather. The word in this sense does not mean waste because, in the heavy leather field, it refers to heads, shoulders and bellies to differentiate them from the more valuable bends. These parts are also finished into serviceable leather for shoe uppers, gloves and other items.

**Oil Tannage.** The process of tanning with animal oils, which is used in the manufacture of certain soft leathers, particularly chamois, and certain kinds of buckskins. Fish oil is generally used.

**Oiling Off.** Coating the surface of wet leather with oil before allowing it to dry.

**Orthopedic Leathers.** A general term for the types of leather used in the manufacture of artificial limbs, braces, etc., for orthopedic purposes. The leathers may range from chamois and horsehide glove to case and strap leathers.

**Ounce.** Term used to indicate weight or substance of certain kinds of leathers (such as upper, upholstery and bag and case leather). In theory it is based upon the assumption that one square foot of leather will weigh a certain number of ounces and will uniformly be of a certain thickness; hence, a three-ounce leather theoretically would be one square foot of leather weighing three ounces. In practice, this varies because of specific gravity of various materials used, and for that reason a splitter's gauge has been adopted which controls the commercial thickness of leather when sold by the square foot. An ounce is equivalent to 1/64th (.0156) of an inch in thickness.

**Packing Leather.** See "Hydraulic Leather."

**Parchment.** Dried, dewooled sheepskins. Vellum is practically the same as parchment except it is made from calfskins. In addition to its use as "parchment" for diplomas and records, it is also utilized for banjo and drum heads, lamp shades, etc. See also "Rawhide."

**Patent Leather.** Leather with a finish which is mirror-like, flexible and waterproof. Term also refers to leather of this appearance made by film lamination.

**Patent Plastic.** See "Plastic Patent."

**Pebbled Grain.** An embossed-leather grain finish resembling a pebbled surface, ranging from fine

pebbled Morocco goat to heavy scotch grain upper leather.

**Peccary.** A very durable leather made from a species of wild boar, native to Mexico, some Central American countries, Brazil and the Argentine. Fine grained and capable of being shaved down to light weight, it is highly desirable for ladies' fine dress and sport gloves. It is generally chrome tanned, and washable.

**Piano Leathers.** A name covering highly specialized leathers used for various purposes in the manufacture of pianos, both manual and mechanical. The leathers are made of selected skivers, full-grain sheepskins or deerskins.

**Picker Leather.** Various types are used in textile mills. This leather may be very soft, mellow and tough, heavily stuffed, steerhides, like comber and gill box apron leather. Picker straps are sometimes made from a glycerine tanned rawhide, which is a strong and pliable leather. For loop pickers a belting leather is generally used and for heavy-duty pickers a hard rawhide, usually made from buffalo hides.

**Pickled Sheepskins.** Unsplit sheep and lambskins, from which the wool has been removed, treated with a solution of salt and acid to preserve them until tanning operation begins.

**Pigment Finish.** Denotes leather whose surface is coated with a material containing pigment or other opaque material.

**Pigskin Leather.** Leather made from the skins of pigs or hogs. Peccary and carpincho leather can be included in this term.

**Pin Seal or Pin Grain.** Name commonly applied to natural grain of high-grade sealskin, tanned for fancy leather. Also imitated on sheepskin, goatskin, calfskin, and cowhide, but these should be described as "pin-grain sheepskin," "pin-grain goatskin," etc.

**Plastic Patent.** A material made from vinyl resins or other materials to resemble patent leather. According to Federal Trade Commission rulings, use of the term "plastic patent leather" is incorrect.

**Rawhide.** This is the usual American name, which has spread largely to other English-speaking countries, for cattlehide that has been dehaired and limed, often stuffed with oil or grease, and has sometimes undergone other preparatory processes, but has not been tanned. Rawhide is used principally for mechanical purposes -- for belt lacings and pins, loom pickers, gaskets, pinions, gears, and also for trunk binding, luggage, etc. Some rawhide has the hair left on.

**Retanned Leather.** Leather which has been given an additional tannage with similar or other tanning materials.

**Reverse Retan.** Leather tanned first with vegetable tannin and then with chromium compounds.

**Reversed Calf.** Term applied to calf leather of heavier weights, finished on flesh side, containing oils to make it more water-resistant than suede, used for shoes where a nappy leather is required. Originally called "Trench Calf" in England, the term "Hunting Calf" is also used in that country. The term "Service Leathers" is used but is generally applied to splits and side leather.

**Rigging Leather.** A strong flexible, vegetable tanned leather.

**Roller Leather.** Special vegetable tanned leather for covers of the upper rolls of cotton-spinning machinery. Tanned from certain classes of sheep, lamb, and calfskins.

**Rough Tanned.** See "In the Rough."

**Russet.** A term of varied meaning in the leather trade, since it connotes both color and tannage. Russet Calf is the natural color of unfinished calf leather resulting from tannage by vegetable extracts. Russet Harness is a completely finished leather of uniform color and finish. Russet Sheepskin, used for shoe linings, is leather tanned in cold-leached hemlock bark, with color resulting from the hemlock. Russet Upholstery is leather tanned but not finished.

**Saddle Leather.** As used in the manufacture of harness and saddlery, term refers to a vegetable

tanned cattlehide. The leather is usually a tan shade, is produced in various thicknesses and is also used outside the saddlery trade for leather goods of various types. In connection with other tannages, the term should be used to specify the leather as "saddle color," "saddle shade" or "saddle finish." "California Saddle Leather" is a registered trade name restricted to a leather tanned by a tanner located in the state of California.

**Saladero Hides.** South American hides corresponding to all hides produced in the United States by the larger "small packers."

**Satin Finish.** A dull or mat finish on leather as distinguished from a "glazed" finish.

**Scotch Grain.** A pebbled pattern embossed usually on cattlehide or calf leather made to resemble the heavy leather with a coarse grain which originated in Scotland.

**Sealskin.** See "Walrus."

**Shank.** That portion of the hide which formed the leg of an animal.

**Sharkskin.** Genuine sharkskin leather is made from the top grain of hides of certain species of sharks and is used principally in shoes, belts, wrist-watch straps, luggage, fine leather goods and for industrial purposes. It has varying, natural grain markings, or fine, smooth mesh-like grain similar to pin seal. The term "sharkskin leather" should not be applied to other leathers, such as horse butts, embossed with a shark grain.

**Shearlings.** Leather made from short woolled sheep or lambskins, sheared before slaughter, the wool being left on the skin when tanned, used for such items as garments and slippers.

**Shell.** A portion from the butt end of a horsehide, from which leather of tight, firm fiber structure and fine grain is made. See also "Cordovan."

**Shoe Leather.** This term is self explanatory and embraces a variety of leathers including: (1) Sole Leather, made chiefly from cattlehides comprising both the heavier grades used for the outer soles of shoes and the lighter grades and offal used to a greater or lesser extent for heels, insoles, toecaps, counters, etc. (2) Upper Leather, made principally from calfskins, goatskins, pigskins and cattlehides for shoe leather that covers the upper part of the foot. (3) Miscellaneous shoe leathers including welting, lining stock, tongue stock, facing stock, etc.

**Shoulder.** That part of the hide between the neck and the main body of the hide.

**Side.** Half a whole hide, cut longitudinally.

**Side or Side-Upper Leather.** Term for describing shoe upper leather consisting of the hair-side of cattlehides finished in a variety of grains or colors. The name originated from the practice of dividing a hide along the backbone into two halves or "sides."

**Skin.** Pelt from a young or small animal (sheep, calf, goat, etc.).

**Skirting Leather.** A specialized vegetable tanned cattlehide leather used for skirts or hanging portions of saddles that come between the legs of a rider and the horse.

**Skiver.** The grain-split of a sheepskin, used for a great variety of purposes which include sweat bands for hats, bag linings, bookbinding, pocketbooks, and fancy leather goods.

**Slats.** Sheepskin in the dried untanned condition, without wool, or with short wool of no commercial value.

**Slunk.** The skin of an unborn or prematurely born animal, especially calf.

**Small Packer Hide.** The hide of an animal slaughtered in one of the smaller meat packing establishments with fewer facilities for specialization than the "big" packers.

**Snuffed Finish.** Leather which has had the outer surface of the grain lightly removed by fine abrasive paper. Also known as "Corrected Grain."

**Snuffed Top Grain.** Corrected Top Grain. See "Hand Buffs."

**Sole Leather.** See "Shoe Leather."

**Spanish Grain.** Finish produced by embossing on fancy or upholstery leather a modified natural grain which formerly was produced by drawing or striking a hide or a skin in a strong tan liquor to shrink the grain, the result being to form a particular pattern on the surface, owing to unequal shrinking of different portions.

**Spew.** A portion of the oily constituents of leather that comes to the grain surface in the form of white crystallized or dark gummy deposits. Sometimes the spelling of "spue" is used.

**Split.** A term used to describe the under portion of a hide or skin, split into two or more thicknesses.

**Steerhide.** Leather made from the hides of steers, usually a heavy leather for soles, beltings, etc., although the term is sometimes used to cover any cattlehide leather, especially in the fancy leather goods trade.

**Strap Leather.** See "Traveling Bag, Suitcase and Strap Leather."

**Stuffed Leather.** Leather which has had wax or grease worked into the substance of the leather. See "Wax Finish."

**Suede Finish.** A finish produced by running the surface of leather on a carborundum or emery wheel to separate the fibers in order to give the leather a nap. The grain side of a leather may be suede-finished, but the process is most often applied to the flesh surface. The term "suede" when used alone refers to leather only. The term denotes a finish, not a type of leather.

**Table Run or Tannery Run.** Terms used to describe leather which has not been sorted or graded before being sold.

**Tawing.** An old English term applied to the process of making leather with alum to distinguish it from leather tanned with vegetable agents.

**Tear-Offs.** Small pieces of leather, less than half a skin, which are torn from a skin during the staking or other tanning operations.

**Texas Steers.** Usually side-branded steer hides of a narrow close compact pattern, and plump; not necessarily from Texas.

**Top Grain.** The grain split of a hide from which nothing has been removed except the hair and associated epidermis.

**Top Grain Snuffed.** A term used to describe upholstery leather of the same type as full top grain except that the surface of the hide is lightly snuffed or sandpapered all over. Such snuffing removes only the top of the hair follicles. Also known as "Hand Buffs," "Corrected Top Grain," and "Snuffed Top Grain."

**Traveling Bag, Suitcase and Strap Leather.** A general term for leather used in traveling bags and suitcases. It does not include the light leathers employed for women's handbags. The staple material for bag and case leather at present is leather made from the hides of animals of the bovine species, but other skins, including heavy sealskins and goatskins, are also used for this purpose.

**Unborn Calf.** See "Slunk."

**Upholstery Leather.** A general term for leather used for furniture, airplanes, buses and automobiles. The staple raw material in this country consists of large or "spready" cattlehides, split at least once and in many cases two or three times. The top cuts go into the higher grades and the splits into the lower grades.

**Upper Leather.** See "Shoe Leather."



**Valve Leather.** See "Hydraulic Leathers."

**Veals.** Designates a large calfskin, almost as large as a kip.

**Vegetable Tannage.** A generic term to cover the process of making leather by the use of tannins obtained from barks, woods or other parts of plants and trees, as distinguished from "mineral tannages."

**Vellum.** See "Parchment."

**Velvet Finish.** See "Suede Finish."

**Vici Kid.** Trade name for chrome tanned, glazed kid leather.

**Wallaby Leather.** Tanned from skins of the wallaby, which is a small or medium-sized species of the kangaroo.

**Walrus.** Leather made from the hide of walrus. Walrus hide is of such thickness that it is generally used for leather for buffing wheels. When split it is used for bag leather. It is difficult to distinguish between leather made of seal and walrus hides after tanning and splitting and the names are often used interchangeably. "Walrus Grain" is sometimes imitated on cattleshides, sheepskins and goatskins as well as on splits from hides of various animals. In such cases, the proper descriptions are "Walrus-grained Cowhide" or "Walrus Grain on Goatskin," etc. The term "walrus leather" when used in the luggage industry is generally regarded in the trade as being genuine sealskin leather on which a simulation of walrus grain has been embossed.

**Washable Leather.** Leather which can be washed under normal washing conditions and will retain dimension, color and other physical characteristics.

**Water Repellent Leather.** A leather which has been treated with any of several chemical compounds which repel the absorption of external water.

**Wax Finish.** A method of finishing heavier weights of upper leather on the flesh side by working wax into the substance.

**Welting Leather.** A term used to describe a curried leather made tough and soft. Leather welting is used in making welt shoes as the uniting material between the shoe upper, sole and insole.

**Willow Grain.** See "Boarded Leathers."

**Woolskins.** Sheepskins tanned with the wool on. See also "Shearlings."

## Leather Research Laboratory

*Committed to Technical Excellence*

As a state-of-the-art research facility, the Leather Research Laboratory offers a wide range of analytical, technical and certification services designed specifically for the leather industry. The Research Laboratory has invested in qualified people and hi-tech equipment to ensure the achievement of technical excellence in four areas of activity:

### Performance Testing & Analytical Service Regulatory Management & Compliance Confidential Consulting Education & Training

The Leather Research Laboratory, located at the University of Cincinnati, offers reliability, quality, exceptional and professional service, solutions and answers.

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In today's competitive marketplace, product performance testing can make all the difference in customer satisfaction, measurable performance, consistent quality, improved company image and product confidence. The Leather Research Laboratory provides accurate and comprehensive testing that makes a difference by offering a wide range of services for the leather industry, including:

Leather Assessment	Physical Property Evaluation
Flammability Testing	Garment & Accessory Appraisal
Fastness Testing	Leather Histology
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Comprehensive Chemical Analysis	Hide, Leather, and Leather Product Defect Diagnosis

*The Research Laboratory is a Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) Accredited Laboratory, as well as an independent verification testing service providing dispute arbitration & tannery analysis confirmation. Testing is offered to the following specifications:*

ASTM (American Society for Testing Materials)  
Military (Federal Test Method Standard 311)

ISO (International Standards Organization)  
CEN (European Committee for Standardization)  
IULTCS (International Union of Leather Technologists & Chemists Society)  
methods: IUC (chemical), IUP (physical), and IUF (fastness)  
FAA (Federal Aviation Authority)  
Individual Manufacturers Specifications

## **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE & REGULATORY MANAGEMENT**

The Leather Research Laboratory has a long and productive history of assisting and, in most cases, leading the tanning industry through the complicated and threatening morass of government regulations. In fact, the Research Laboratory has been involved in some of the country's most significant environmental and worker health and safety issues. The evolutionary process of regulatory development has resulted in a comprehensive and complex system of regulations covering clean water, clean air, waste disposal, and contaminated land cleanup. The Research Laboratory has battled vigorously and successfully to minimize the negative impact on the leather industry and provide confidence for its future.

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The Leather Research Laboratory provides advanced seminars, workshops and training courses that serve the entire leather industry. Exceptional leather training has been designed specifically for the leather buyer and leather product manufacturer while the leather tanner, finisher, distributor and supplier can benefit from courses in advanced leather technology.

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**Leather Research Laboratory** at the University of Cincinnati  
5997 Center Hill Avenue, Building C, Cincinnati, Ohio 45224  
(513) 242-6300 / Fax (513) 242-9797 / corynj@uc.edu

**[www.leatherusa.org](http://www.leatherusa.org)**