Leather Marketplace

Wide selection in:

• Price
• Types
• Quality
• Construction
• Workmanship
• Beauty
• Wear-ability
Leather Customers

- Basic need—simply want something to sit on
- Long Term purchase
- Heavy use requirements
- Ease of care—family, pets, lifestyle environment
- Leather vs. Fabric selection & characteristics
- Comfort, Elegance, and Design goals
- Budget (low, medium, high)
Reasons to Buy Leather

• Natural Product
• Unique distinctive characteristics—no hide is exactly like any other hide
• Historically Prized
• Exceptional Long Life
• Flame Resistance
• Clean-ability, when properly maintained
Myths vs. Reality

• Expectation high quality leather will be “Flawless”

• Natural Markings show the character of the hide (stretch marks, wrinkles, etc). Just as other natural materials like wood, shell, stone, etc.

• Unique markings identifies Natural Leather from Man-made leather products.
Customer Expectations

• 100% Uniform Color & Grain—Only Vinyl or heavily finished Corrected Grain Leathers will be suitable.
• Warmth and Comfort—Full Grain Aniline Leather offers highest quality of breath-ability and suppleness
Leather Pricing

- 30% or more of each hide is not useable for upholstery
- Larger areas of leather, free of serious blemishes are harder to come by, thus more expensive and desirable
- Tanning & Finishing processes

Healed Scars  |  Fat Wrinkles  |  Color Variation  |  Healed Insect bites
Grading Hides—Home on the Range

**Grade C** = Range Cattle,

- Bug bites, scars…
- Smaller hides (35-40 square feet).
- 65-70% of all hides.
- Furniture leather is often stamped & top-coated 90%
- Full Aniline 10%
Grading Hides—Bessie

**Grade**

**B** = Sheltered Cattle (dairy cattle, branded, Charolais, Herford).

- Better condition & larger hides.
- 25% all hides.
Grading Hides—Best of Show

**Grade A** = Show Cattle, 4-H Cows.

- Little or no imperfections.
- Will have stretch marks and wrinkles.
- 60 square feet, plus.
- Approximately 5%-10% of all hides.
Leather Types

- Full Grain—Top Grain (top layer) which has not been buffed or sanded. All Grade A “Characteristics” are embraced and considered to be of greatest beauty and quality. Commands highest price.
- Corrected Grain—Top Grain surface markings altered by buffing and sanding imperfections
- Split—Lower Layer, (not as flexibly resistant) sometimes used on sides and backs of upholstered items to cut costs. Vinyl can also be used, for even greater cost savings (lower quality)
- Suede—Lowest Layer
- Bi-cast—Lowest Layer with a protective coating
Tanned Leather Types

- Aniline—most expensive and natural
- Semi Aniline—a thin protective coating applied
- Pigmented—corrected and colored
- Bi-Cast—polyurethane layer added
- Pull Up—natural leather designed to show distress as it is scratched or stretched
- Antique Finish—darker color applied and rubbed off to give an aged look, common in chesterfield styles
- Nubuck—grain is buffed for a delicate velvety surface
Production Stages

• Preparatory—preservation, de-hairing, splitting, etc
• Tanning—stabilizing against bacteria
• Finishing/Crusting—thinning, re-tanning, lubrication, coloring, etc.
Grain Correcting

- Used to minimize the appearance of unacceptable imperfections on surface of hide.
- Buffing and Sanding—used to create uniform surface on hide.
- Natural looking patterns can be embossed with heat or pressure.
- Pigmentation coatings can also be added to surface of hides.
Tanning

- Turns hide into leather
- Preservation
- Softening, pliability, and durability
- Vegetable Tanning (Tannins)
- Chromium Tanning (Chromium Salts) is most used process for upholstery leathers. Can last decades.
Wet Blue

• Also known as Chrome Tanning.
• Hides come out of tanning drums both wet and blue in color.
• Popular tanning process for upholstery because hides are resistant to heat, light, shrinking, and have good strength.
Dyeing & Finishing

• Tanned Leather is first colored with penetrating aniline dye. Does not cover over natural markings.
• Finish Coatings (one or more) with clear or pigmented color on top surface of hide.
• The more coatings, the stiffer the leather becomes. (Hide quality and tanning process used, can also stiffen leather).
Full or Pure Aniline

• Also called “Natural” Leather
• Has a clear protective coating only
• No Grain Correction, Embossing, or Pigmented Coatings
• Considered the best quality and most expensive of leathers.
• Hides have a minimum of natural markings, moderate color variations are allowed to show through.
• Soft and supple to the touch
• Tends to develop a Patina with age
• Only a small percentage of hides are good enough to be converted into pure aniline leather.
Semi-Aniline Leather

• Also called “Luxury”, or Aniline Plus leather
• Full Grain Leather with only a small amount of surface finish, transparent pigment coating.
• Allows most of the natural markings to show through.
• May not be suitable for high traffic or high wear environments.
Protected Aniline Leather

- Also called, “Family” leather
- Less expensive and more common than Pure Aniline and Semi-Aniline leathers.
- Consistent coloration due to protective pigmented coatings.
- Natural Markings are less noticeable
- Surface repels water. Easier to clean than pure aniline leather.
- Stands up well against heavy use.
Man-Made Leather Materials

• Leather scraps combined in a vat of glue. Then pressed out into sheets:
  – Bonded Leather
  – Reconstituted Leather

• Bi-cast Leather—Low grade or reconstituted leather with a thick layer of polyurethane, to add strength and durability.
Leather Care

• Avoid direct sunlight
• Maintain at least two feet between furniture and heat sources
• Dust regularly with a soft cloth
• Carefully select type of leather best suited for lifestyle and environment
Buyers Guide

- Lifestyle considerations: children, pets, etc
- Finished Leather—protective coatings provide ease of maintenance (family, semi-aniline, corrected)
- Natural Leather—no finish coatings applied (aniline, pull up, oil/waxy pull up)
Gamma Leather

• Strict unconditional quality policy. Only hides from Italy and Northern Europe
• Processed in the best Italian tanneries for softness, breath-ability, and to retain natural patterns
• When treated properly, our leathers become more beautiful with time
• Stock several categories of leather to best suit consumer lifestyle and price points
• Thicknesses between 1.6mm to 5mm
Why Choose Gamma

Highly Customizable and Flexible:

• Exceptional leather selection and application (ability to specify multiple leathers to suit personal designs)
• Choice of matching or contrasting stitch colors
• Variety of seam styles offered (edge to edge, welted, single or double top stitching, etc)
• Impressive number of sectionals, configurations, and options available for ultimate customization
• Dedicated US office, located in High Point, NC committed to outstanding Customer Service
• Renowned reputation for impeccable quality
• Quick Ship Program
• Impressive Lead Time: 10 to 12 weeks delivered
References

Gamma International
Wikipedia
Leather Depot
Land of Leather
Irving Leather Outlet
Furniture Today

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