# WHY USE LEATHER?

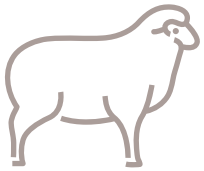
## THE CHARACTERISTIC AND PROPERTIES OF LEATHER

LEATHER
NATURALLY

# WHY SHOULD YOU USE LEATHER?

## LEATHER IS AN INCREDIBLY UNIQUE AND VERSATILE MATERIAL, WITH DIFFERENT PROPERTIES AND CHARACTERISTICS. GET THE FACTS.

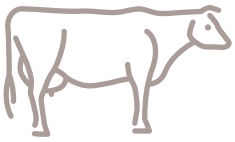
**Leather is one of the most versatile materials known.** This is due to the unique arrangement of complex natural fibres that give the variations on the different types of hides and skins. Chemical and physical processes are tailored to give **specific properties** and **performance** to the hides and skins as they are being converted into leather.



SKINS

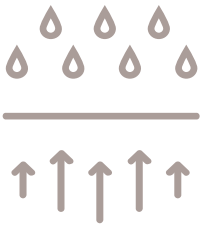
### FOR DEFINITION:

Those from small animals are called **skins,** and those from large animals are called **hides.**



HIDES

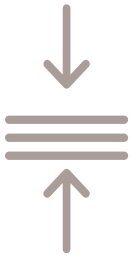
### HERE WE HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT VARIATIONS OF KEY LEATHER PROPERTIES:



## Water-Resistance

Leather can be made to **absorb** water, **resist** water or be completely **waterproof.** Most leathers manufactured for the shoe, bag, upholstery and leather goods industries offer a degree of water resistance that enables the leather to get wet yet, after drying, retain the properties of **elasticity** and **shape.** Waterproofing can be made for specific applications, particularly for outdoor shoes and boots that allow for walking several hours in the rain without getting wet feet. **Most waterproof leathers are made from cattle hides.**

## Thickness



**Skins** produce **thin leathers** that can be used for bookbinding, gloves, lining and garments; they have outstanding softness.

**Cow leather** can have a great **variation of thicknesses** because they can be split in layers. When split thin, leathers can be used for garment, gloves and leather goods. **Medium thickness** leathers, on the other hand, are more widely used for upholstery, automotive parts, shoes, bags and leather goods, whereas **thick leathers** are used for footwear soles and crafts.

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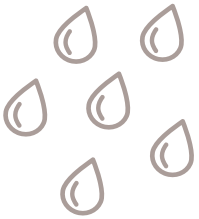
## Water Absorption & Desorption

This is one of leather's unique properties, allowing leather to **absorb** moisture and with time **release** it into the environment. For shoes, this property creates outstanding comfort not found in any other material. **Perspiration** is drawn from the foot into the leather and then **evaporates** from the outer surface of the shoe. Leather can hold large quantities of moisture without feeling damp so the foot stays dry and comfortable without the chill of fast evaporation or puddling of cooling perspiration.

## Water Vapor Permeability

Often called **'breathability',** this characteristic allows moisture and air to permeate through the leather. This property is particularly important for shoes' comfort; as the foot sweats it can produce large amounts of moisture that move through the leather to the outside, keeping the inside of the shoe **drier** and more **comfortable**, with a lower moisture level. Waterproof leathers that are engineered to maintain breathability while providing protection from wet conditions will provide an outstanding **combined performance.**

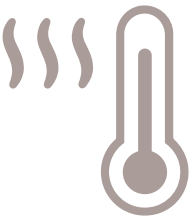


## Aesthetics & Surface Pattern

There are many variations to the colour, texture, feel, smell, surface resistance and handle of leather that makes this product **extremely unique** and **valuable.** Leathers can be as natural as observed in pure vegetable leather or as refined with outstanding performance as an automotive seat. Leather is fashionable in all colours while maintaining outstanding **technical performance.**

## Heat Insulation

One of the main reasons why leather is comfortable on the human skin is because of its strong **thermal insulation** capabilities. Heat insulation is a measure of the rate at which heat passes through a material. And because leather contains a large **volume** of air (which is a poor **conductor** of heat), the heat travels incredibly slowly through the material.



## Malleability

Another factor that makes leather such a favourable material is because of its ability to be **moulded** into a new shape. It can be made to either **stiffen** or can be made to be flexible and will retain its new shape as required. This is very important in footwear, since both feet are rarely exactly the same size and shape. With a little wear they soon **adapt to fit** perfectly.

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