

A bag maker's guide to

LEATHER + RIVETS

Greetings, maker!

You're about to embark on a heavy-duty bag making project that features leather straps and metal rivets. Learning to set rivets correctly is crucial to ensuring that your finished bag is strong and its weight-bearing straps hold up to wear and tear over time. Here are some things to keep in mind that will help set you up for success!



on KH tools + supplies with DISCOUNT CODE:

YAYRIVETS



KLUMHOUSE.COM

Welcome!

This guide is designed to help orient you to the world of leather and rivets. It outlines basic concepts and terminology, so you can forge ahead with confidence.

This is your path to becoming a rivet setting boss: →

START

- 1 . Understanding Leather Weight
- 2 . Rivet Types + Tools
- 3 . Pairing Leather Thickness + Rivet Post Length
- 4 . Pro Tips for Setting Rivets

1. LEATHER

BASICS

LEATHER WEIGHT

Leather is measured in ounces. This measurement relates directly to its thickness. The best leather for straps is between 6-10 oz or 2.4-4.0 mm (~ 3/16") in thickness.



LEATHER TOOLS

- > Rotary Punch / Drive Punch
- > Mallet + Cutting Board
- > Round End Punch
- > Leather Marking Pen



DOUBLE-CAP

- > Most common
- > 2 pieces, post + cap
- > When hit, end of post smashes, expanding into cap to create a secure hold



TUBULAR

- > Extra-strength hold
- > 1 piece, no cap
- > A "Peening Tool" is used to flatten and splay open the end of the tube

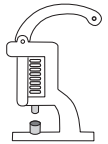


2. RIVETS

TOOLS

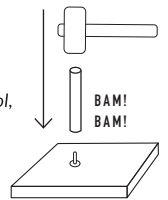
DOUBLE-CAP

- \$ > Hammer + Hard Surface
- \$\$ > Rivet Setting Tool, Anvil + Mallet
- \$\$\$ > Industrial Hand Press



TUBULAR

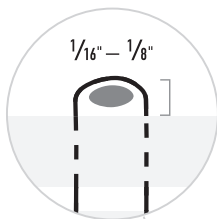
- \$\$ > Tubular Rivet Peening Tool, Mallet + Hard Surface
- \$\$\$ > Industrial Hand Press



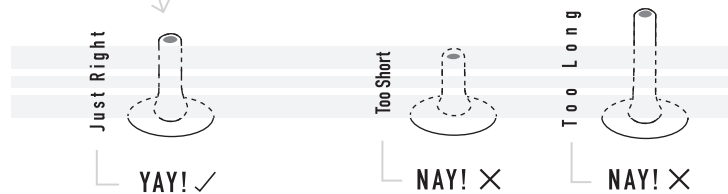
3. PAIRING

RATIOS

The relationship between leather weight and rivet post length is very important! Rivet posts should extend slightly above (1/16" - 1/8") the bulk of your materials.



LEATHER WEIGHT	RIVET POST LENGTH
5-7 oz	SMALL (6-7 mm or 0.25"-0.30")
7-8 oz	MEDIUM (7-9.5 mm or 0.30"-0.38")
8-10 oz	LARGE (10-11 mm or 0.4"-0.5")
10-11oz	EXTRA LARGE (12-13 mm or 0.5")



4. SETTING

PRO TIPS

ALIGNMENT

- > Vertical alignment is key to avoid crooked rivets.
- > Position work so rivet is straight up and down.
- > Position setting tool so it is straight up and down.

FORCE

- > Begin with medium-strength hits and increase force.
- > It typically takes 8-12 strong hits to fully set.
- > Don't be afraid to really hit it!



SURFACE

- > Work on a non-slip surface to prevent crooked rivets.
- > Minimize bounce—use a hard, stable surface.
- > Stone slab, metal surface, even a concrete floor.

PRACTICE

- > Rivet setting is a skill that's built with practice!
- > Practice on scrap leather and fabric before setting rivets on your bag.
- > Take time to acquaint yourself with new tools.

CHECK

- > When fully set, rivets should be slightly indented into the leather.
- > Pinch the rivet between your thumb and forefinger to make sure it feels straight.
- > Tug on the strap to check the hold is strong.

TROUBLESHOOT

Did you set a rivet incorrectly? Don't worry! Here's a video tutorial on removing wonky rivets:

klumhouse.com/blog/fix-hardware